



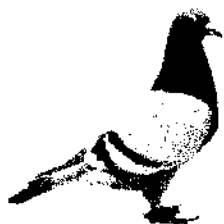
Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

January 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44 Number 1



Avian Navigation with Dr. Hugh McIsaac

January 26 DFO Meeting

Dr. McIsaac is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Denver in the Department of Biological Sciences. Dr. McIsaac started his educational experience working on bird navigation as an undergraduate at Cornell University and completed his Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh (with dissertation involving bird navigation).

His principal research interests concern behavioral ecology and animal behavior. The focus of his studies continues to be bird navigation. Much of his work involves behavioral studies conducted in the field with homing pigeons. He is particularly interested in the mechanisms that birds use to determine position, such as is required in the hypothetical map-and-compass systems that many scientists postulate guide birds along their journeys.

Dr. McIsaac has published numerous articles on bird navigation involving both raptors and pigeons. His photographs have been included in Living Bird Magazine (the publication for the Cornell

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January Field Trips

Thursday, January 1

Denver Urban Count

Get a good start on your 2009 list! For areas and leaders, see page 9 in this Lark Bunting.

Saturday, January 3

Denver Museum of Nature and Science – the Bird Collections

Jeff Stevenson, Zoology Collection Manager, will lead 15 lucky DFO members on a new kind of field trip (no weather worries!) This renowned research area is not open to the public. It has the largest gathering of study skins in the American west – from around the world and right around home. Museum entrance fee is included in this morning tour (10 am to noon) Please call Patty Echelmeyer (303-233-4947) by December 30th to put your name in the hat (or in the nest?) to see who will be the “fortunate fifteen.”

Sunday, January 4

Belmar Historic Park

Leader: Paula Hansley 720-890-2628. Meet at 0830 at the parking lot in Lakewood, 800 S. Wadsworth. From Wadsworth, turn west on Ohio Avenue. Go straight ahead for 2 blocks into Irongate parking area next to the lake. ½ day trip. A special place for urban birding. An easy walk and a great way to start your annual tally.

Saturday, January 10

South Platte Park Wanderings

Leader: Ed Holub 303-979-2194. Meet at 0800 at the Carson Nature Center parking lot, north of Mineral Avenue, 1 block west of So. Santa Fe Drive behind Aspen Grove Shopping Center. Lunch optional. Trip may go beyond noon. This area yields surprises in all seasons.

Continued on next page

January Field Trips

Sunday, January 11

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt & possibly Mt. Olivet Cemetery

Leader: Paul Slingsby, 303-422-3728. Meet at 0800 on south side of Clear Creek where Youngfield crosses the creek. ½ day trip possibly gathering for lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Saturday, January 17

88th and the Platte River

Leader: Buzz Schaumberg, 303-699-1721. Meet at 0830 at parking lot at 88th and the Platte for ½ day trip. Always ducks galore – possibly Long-tailed Duck and Barrow's Golden Eye.

Sunday, January 18

Bear Creek Lake Park

Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551. Meet at 0800 at Park Entrance (SE corner of Morrison Rd. & C470).

Call leader to arrange for fee park's pass. ½ day trip. This is Mike's special territory so if the birds are there, he'll find 'em.

Saturday, January 24

Castlewood Canyon and local feeders

Leader: Gail Evans 303-758-2231. Call leader for where and when to meet. May carpool at Parker Regional Park. Surprises in winter in this area. ½ day trip but good spots for picnicking. Gail will check for recent sightings.

Sunday, January 25

Cherry Creek Recreation Area

Leader: Karen van Saltza 720-568-4652. Meet at 0800 at the marina. Bring scopes and dress for changeable weather. ½ day trip so lunch is optional. Good time to buy your annual Parks pass. Karen has been an enthusiastic and capable Master Birder Program participant.

Thursday, January 29

Pueblo Area

Leader: Chuck Thornton-Kolby 720-320-1974- Nestling Tours. Meet at 0600 at I25 & Yale Park 'n'Ride. Full day trip, carpooling important! If weather is BAD we'll decide in the parking lot what our route will be.

Saturday, January 31

Ponderosa Pine Preserve in Aurora

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell, Get information and sign up at 303-739-2428. Mary Ann is Aurora's lead naturalist, so she'll have updated news of bird happenings out there!

Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer 303.233.4947, compiled by Cris Cook



Photographed by Veronica Holt, Elbert County Bushtits dig into peanut butter suet on a 1 degree morning.

The feeder hanging next to the pole is a homemade peanut butter feeder—hardware cloth wrapped around a piece of wood smeared with extra chunky Skippy!

Avian Navigation: January Feature Program

Lab of Ornithology). In 2006, he presented a lecture at the Western Field Ornithologists meeting on "Prairie Falcon Attack Methods and Success Rates against Pigeons" and a 2003 lecture to the Cooper Ornithological Society in Arizona on the "Effects of Monocular Vision on the Orientation of Pigeons Homing from Several Familiar Sites." His lectures on bird navigation and other biological subjects cross the entire country and span two decades.

All DFO meetings are interesting and the company of bird watchers is always worthwhile to keep. **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 PM AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30 PM.** Thus, mark your calendar for each meeting and plan to come by 7:15 PM on these dates.

Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium in Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 PM and 7:30 PM. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Future Dates and Speakers: Mark your calendar now for the following fourth Mondays of the month. On February 23, 2009, Dr. John Demboski, of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, will share some of his special knowledge about the bird skins collection at the Museum on February 23, 2009. Dr. Albert E. Floyd (also known as Ted Floyd) will present some new thoughts on Chipping Sparrows and other avian subjects on March 23. Another special speaker will complete the spring 2009 schedule on April 27.



What's in a name?

Wilson's Warbler, Baird's Sandpiper, Sprague's Pipit, Bonaparte's Gull—have you ever wondered who these birds are named after? We all know Audubon as in the yellow rumped warbler and his contribution to ornithology and Lewis as in woodpecker (who is not named after our own Norm).

The question remains – who are these folks that have birds named after them? Costa, Cooper, Lucy, Hutton, Smith and Stellar – these are a few of the names that we will investigate and inform you as to their connection to the bird world. Travelers, scientists, relations to the rich and famous, discoverers, ornithologists and naturalists will be our targets.

Thomas Lincoln (he has a sparrow named after him) was a naturalist, abolitionist and farmer in his home state of Maine and part of Audubon's trip of 1834. The sparrow was originally called Tom's Finch.

Good birding to all,

Niña Routh

Source: "Whose Bird" – Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins"



So Sayeth the Speaker...

Summaries of previous programs —see what you missed!

From Carol Blackard: *An Uncommon Eider* by Kevin Cook

Kevin Cook tantalized bird lovers at the October, '08 DFO meeting with images of Carolina parakeets, pale-spotted tinamous, Eskimos curlews, and ivory-billed woodpecker bills found in Colorado. The fascinating history of these reports included a failed attempt to overwinter South American gamebirds, the trading of bird parts which extended all across the US, and the likely extinction of one of the above birds which was once shot in the Washington Park area and sold for \$40.

Mr. Cook shared his view of the CFO Rare Bird Committee process of evaluating reports of rare birds, claiming subjective and arbitrary habits that may compromise the scientific rigor and inclusiveness of the Colorado bird checklist. Examples included the exclusion of the mottled duck record because the colors around the beak and feet had faded in the museum specimen, even though the observer had seen the duck when it was alive. Then there was the rock ptarmigan reported near Cripple Creek in 1882 which turned out to be a white-tailed ptarmigan with a tail darkened by coal dust.

He advanced a proposal for adding a second scientific and historic record. He would call it a catalog, and suggested it might help solve some of the problems of the current single record system. A catalog would record all specimens and claims of rare bird sightings and would not be subject to purging by committee. He believes this might allow for the retention of historical perspective and controversies of the past. In addition, it would include some birds currently precluded from checklists but which live in the wild and exhibit a symbiotic relationship with their surroundings, eg: mute swans. He would like to see checklists continued, serving the uses of the recreational birder and the field bird observer. But he feels that natural science needs two instruments, a catalog and a checklist, two different tools for two different purposes. Something for this audience of checklist users to ponder.

Mr. Cook's book, *An Uncommon Eider*, promises more historical and ecological revelations...once it is published.

From Chris Blakeslee: *Birding Venezuela* with John Drummond

John's excellent presentation at the November DFO meeting about his adventures birding in Venezuela was enjoyed by all. His trip occurred in February, 2008, with a small British group guided by West Wings. In his talk he guided DFO from the high Andes of western Venezuela down to the Llanos (savannas) and cattle country of the Orinoco River Basin, back over the mountains to Lake Maracaibo and through the Maracaibo lowlands along the Caribbean coast and back to Caracas. The talk was illustrated with wonderful photos of Scarlet Ibis, Boat-billed Heron, Pinnated Bittern, Citron-throated Toucans, a Sword-billed Hummingbird, and the rare Bearded Helmetcrest. Not only were there fascinating endemics, but numerous tree ducks, herons, storks, kingfishers, tanager, and amazingly colored parakeets as well as crocs, a Giant Anteater, a 3-toed Sloth, and docile ca pybaras.

In addition to the wonderful birding Venezuela offers, John explained various aspects of President Hugo Chavez's anti-American regime, the difficulties of traveling in Venezuela for Americans, and the deterioration of the natural environment caused by Chavez's political and social policies. It was an enjoyable and informative evening!

Remembering Winston William "Bill" Brockner
Bill was a lover of birds!
July 22, 1915 - November 19, 2008

November Additional Reports

Species	Dates	Nr seen	Location	County	Observers & notes
Loon, red-throated	11/27-11/28	1imm	Chatfield Reservoir	Douglas	Joey Kellner, Paul Differding, Glenn Walbek, Andrew Spencer
Loon, yellow-billed	11/2-11/15	1imm	Antero Reservoir	Park	Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak
Tundra Swan	11-20	2	Walker Pit, Franktown	Douglas	Hugh & Urling Kingery
Am. Wigeon	All fall	Very few	Chatfield, Franktown	Douglas/Jeff	Urling & Hugh Kingery
Scoter, white-winged	11-15	1	Spinney Mountain Reservoir	Park	Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak
Scoter, white-winged	11-29	1ad male	Chatfield Reservoir	Jefferson	Joey Kellner, Paul Differding, Glenn Walbek, Andrew Spencer, Cole Wild, Rick & Connie Steinkamp
Scoter, black	11-15	1f	Spinney Mountain Reservoir	Park	Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak
Scoter, black	11-08	1imm	Eleven Mile Reservoir	Park	Tina Jones, Joey Kellner, Alison Kondler
Scoter, black	11-27	2	Chatfield Reservoir	Douglas/Jeff	Tony Leukering, Joey Kellner, Glenn Walbek, Andrew Spencer
Duck, long-tailed	11-08	1imm	Antero Reservoir	Park	Tina Jones, Joey Kellner, Alison Kondler
Goldeneye, Barrow's	11-15	1m	Eleven Mile Reservoir	Park	Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak
Barrow's Goldeneye	11-19	1	Walker Pit, Franktown	Douglas	Urling Kingery
Merganser, Red-breasted	11-18	3	Walker Pit, Franktown	Douglas	Urling & Hugh Kingery
Merlin	11-29	1	East of Larkspur	Douglas	Mary Cloud Ammons
Gull, glaucous-winged	11/2-11/15	1-1st year	Antero Reservoir	Park	Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak
Bushtit	11-03	8	Pinyon pine in front yard near Hampden/Monaco	Denver	Diana Tomback
Bushtit	11-09	16	Chatfield Reservoir	Douglas	Joey Kellner, Glenn Walbek
Bushtit	Several flocks all fall	15-18	County Rd 21	Elbert	Veronica Holt
Swamp Sparrow	11-25	2	Cherry Creek Reservoir	Arapahoe	Polleke Siraa
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	11-02	1	Chatfield State Park	Douglas/Jeff	ASGD
Northern Parula	11-02	1	Chatfield State Park	Douglas/Jeff	Doug Kibbe & Mackenzie Goldthwait
Yellow-rumped Warbler	11-02	1	Chatfield State Park	Douglas/Jeff	Doug Kibbe & Mackenzie Goldthwait

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Welcome New Members!

Debra Oberbeck, 1790 Fenton St Westminster 80020 303.469.0951

John Harrington, 1152 S Otis St Lakewood 80232 303.937.8239

Bill Buttner, 750 Tabor St #14 Golden, (or Merritt Island, FL) 321.403.7866

Joe Roller - Welcome Back, Joe

Greg Smith, 2764 Dayton St Denver 80238 303.377.1486

Harriet Stratton, 5931 S Crestview St Littleton 80120 303.798.9924

Contributions to Rare Bird Alert/Educational Endowment Fund:

RBA: Debra Oberbeck, Robert Zilly, Steve & Kathryn Smith, Borrie & George Lohr, Mike Foster, Doris Cruze, Alice Kruse, Minerva Canavan, Lois Levinson, Mary & Dave Driscoll, Deborah Ostergard & Peter Gillette, Meredith Anderson, Wm & Nan Urquhart, Karen von Saltza, Nina Routh, Mackenzie Goldthwait & Douglas Kibbe

EEF Rex McGehee, Diane & Jeff Carter, Mike Foster, Lyn Graves, Lois Levinson, Steve & Kathryn Smith, Doris Cruze, Mary & Dave Driscoll, Bonnie Mulvany, Chris Owens in memory of Richard Mendez, Meredith Anderson, Alice Kruse, Nina Routh, Carol Cook, Charles Hundertmark, Wm & Nan Urquhart, Mackenzie Goldthwait & Douglas Kibbe. Thank you!

Special thank you to the Tuesday Birders for \$100 donation to help maintain the web site and the Lark Bunting.

November Field Trip Summaries

November 1, Saturday *Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR (ROC)*

Leader: Dave Rhoades. **Observers:** Don Beltz, Bob Bucknam, Bill Buttner, Don Clasen, Sue Clasen, Patty Echelmeyer, Ellie Jones, Sue Schulman, Betsy Shaw, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 6 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes, prairie, cottonwoods, elevation 5250'. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, 50-75°F, northwest wind, light breeze. **Totals:** 46 species, 875 individuals.

November 2, Sunday *Scoters (SCO)*

Leader: Joey Kellner. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Dan Brook, Mark Chavez, Chuck Hundermark, Ira Sanders, Dick Schotter, Tim Smart, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp, Cheryl Tooten. **Time:** 0733-1630. **Distance:** 400 miles by car. **Weather:** Clear all day, 25-62°F, west wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 49 species, 5105 individuals.

Highlights: Met at 5:30am and sky was just barely starting to get light on this first morning after daylight savings time started. Andrew Spencer, Nathan Pieplow, Cole Wild and Christian Nunes were also birding the South Park lakes and reported several birds to our group. We missed the Snow Bunting at the south boat launch at Antero Reservoir by about 10 seconds!

November 8, Saturday *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader: Steve Kennedy. **Observers:** Jean Eddins, Warren Finch, RD Ginn, Lyn Graves, Pauline Ide, Ellie Jones, Deb Kennedy, Toni Rautus, Bob Spencer, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp. **Time:** 0800-1400. **Distance:** 12 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian and open water, plains, elevation 5300'. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, 40-59°F, northeast wind, 5-10mph. **Totals:** 49 species, 1457 individuals.

November 9, Sunday *Walker Pit, Castlewood Canyon SP, and Kingerys' Feeders (WAL)*

Leader: Urling Kingery. **Observers:** Jill Boice, Mary Driscoll, Patty Echelmeyer, Jean Eddins, Carol Flynn, Clint Flynn, RD Ginn, Derek Hankins, Diana King, Michael King, Hugh Kingery, Jan Ornes, Toni Rautus, Betsy Shaw, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp. **Time:** 0800-1330. **Distance:** 12 miles by car, 2½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Gravel pit lake, scrub oak, scattered ponderosa pine/douglas fir. **Weather:** Clear, light wind, 27-55°F. **Totals:** 37 species, 335 individuals.

Highlights: Besides the birds listed, we also inspected the nest built last summer by a female Prairie Warbler, Colorado's first nesting record for that species; now that the leaves have fallen, we could see the nest clearly. We saw two Prairie Falcons chasing each other; 21 Townsend's Solitaires singing and calling as they defended their winter territories of juniper trees with the food supplies they hope to have last until spring. At lunch, we reviewed the species seen, following AOU taxonomic order. We had just gotten to raptors when a pair of Golden Eagles soared overhead, precisely in checklist order!

November 15, Saturday *Pueblo (PUE)*

Leader(s): Ira and Tammy Sanders. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Mary C Burger, Karen Clouse, John Drummond, Beverly Jensen, Tina Jones, Marjorie Joy, Kris Koff, Mary Ellen Moore, Polly Nelander, Kay Niyo, Brandon Percival, Sue Schulman, Tim Smart, Barb Thomas. **Time:** 0640-1530. **Distance:** 245 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Reservoir, riparian, city park, pinon-juniper, elevation 4500'. **Weather:** Clear, 17-49°F, south-southwest wind, 0-12mph. **Totals:** 67 species, 1705 individuals. **Highlights:** Field Sparrow seen by a few, a very big beaver in the Arkansas River at Valco Ponds, and great weather.

November 16, Sunday *Roxborough State Park (ROX)*

Leader: Doris Cruze. **Observers:** Dan Brachear, Bill Buttner, Nancy Crews, Larry Dewey, Robin Dewey, Derek Hankins, Jill Holden, Lynne Jordan, Sharon Kay, Deb Ostergard, Dick Prickett, Dick Vogel, Dennis Wojcicki. **Time:** 0800-1030. **Distance:** 2.2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Open foothills meadows, scrub oak. **Weather:** Clear, 42-60°F, south southwest wind, 10-25mph. **Totals:** 19 species, 133 individuals.

November 22, Saturday *Belmar Historic Park (BEL)*

Leader: Karleen Schofield. **Observers:** Joe and Corrinne Bartell, Jerry Davidson, Jean Davis, Leslie Gerard, Derek Hankins, Chuck Lowrie, Elizabeth and Rich Maslow, Betty Minges, Neil Montague, Pam Norris, Deb Wittwer. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, pine, lake, grassland, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Cold, sunny, 26-55°F, calm. **Totals:** 27 species, 378 individuals.

November Field Trip Summaries, continued

November 23, Sunday *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader: Dick Schottler. **Observers:** Mary C Burger, Jeannie Mitchell, Kay Niyo, Dick Prickett, Nina Roth, Barbara Thomas.

Time: 0730-1220. **Distance:** 5 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Weather:** Mostly clear, 35-55°F, variable wind, 0-20mph. **Totals:** 34 species, 582 individuals.

Highlights: A murrelet species was seen from the old heronry overlook as it flew north toward the dam. Our looks at it did not enable us to identify it to species. We spent the final 45 minutes of the trip trying to relocate the bird without success. To make the search more difficult, the wind started blowing 15-20mph from the north creating whitecaps on the lake (it had been calm all morning until then). The other highlight was a porcupine seen as it slept in a tree.

November 28, Friday *Platte River and 88th Greenway (PLA)*

Leader: Jackie King. **Observers:** Vicki Camp, Dick Prickett. **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, elevation 5280'. **Weather:** Cold but nice, 28-40°F, northwest wind, 0-2mph. **Totals:** 29 species, 583 individuals.

Highlights: It was really a good trip! We saw five pipits walking along the river and then later, we saw the same five up in a group of trees and it was so interesting to watch them walk along the branches, bobbing their tails as pipits always do. It was like watching someone invent a new strut! We also got great looks at this merlin that flew toward us then sat in a tree for the longest time while we all watched it—either a female or an immature male.

November 29, Saturday *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)* Cancelled due to inclement weather.

November 30, Sunday *Rigli Ranch (RIG)*

Leader: Joe Rigli. **Observers:** Melissa Smith. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 16 miles by car. **Habitat:** Riparian woodlands, sandhill-sagebrush, grasslands, ponds, fields. **Weather:** Cloudy, cold, partly sunny, 33-39°F, northwest wind, 20-40mph. **Totals:** 10 species, 299 individuals.

Highlights: Even though a strong cold, blustery wind was out of the northwest, a few prairie birds braved the wind and the cold. But most were hiding, waiting for more favorable weather. However, we did observe many horned larks, who love this kind of weather, feeding along wind-swept cow trails and out on short-grass prairies. Two adult male Northern Harriers were hunting together and a pair of Ferruginous Hawks were observed searching out a prairie dog town. A handful of American Tree Sparrows laid low out of the wind in the branches of a peach-leaved willow.

Tuesday Birders

November 4 *Audubon Center at Chatfield (AUD)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 38. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood groves, open meadows, ponds, elevation 5510'. **Weather:** Clear to partly cloudy, 53-68°F, west/southwest wind, 0-15 mph with gusts to 25mph. **Totals:** 30 species, 224 individuals.

November 11 *South Platte Park/Carson Nature Center (SOU)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 29. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Gravel ponds, riparian, cottonwood, willow, bicycle trail, elevation 5600'. **Weather:** Mostly cloudy to partly sunny, 43-51°, northwest wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 41 species, 426 individuals. July 15, 2008 Evergreen Lake and Maxwell Falls

November 18 *Red Rocks and Morrison Parks (RED)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 46. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 4.4 miles by car, 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Foothills, shrubland, riparian, city park, elevation 5800-6360'. **Weather:** Sunny, mild, 59-79°F, no wind. **Totals:** 17 species, 67 individuals.

November 25 *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 41. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 15 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Large reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, grassy areas, shoreline, open water, elevation 5430'. **Weather:** Cloudy, 37-54°F, southwest wind, 0-7mph. **Totals:** 32 species, 1147 individuals.

Details, including species seen, of each trip are on the DFO web site at www.dfobirders.org

What Birds to Look for in January—and Where to Look for Them

By Ira Sanders

DFO Birders,

This is a new column that we are trying out to see if it is helpful to our members. The plan is to have a monthly column to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I'll be concentrating on the less common birds you may see at that season though I'll also throw in reminders like: It's a good time to be checking the gulls for rarities and conifers for crossbills. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In January, the average high in Denver is: 43 degrees and the average low is: 16 degrees, though we all know it can be considerably warmer and colder.



Winter is the time of the year to be looking for Snowy Owls on the plains of Colorado. If you are anywhere east of the I-25 corridor, be alert for something that may look like a white fireplug (water hydrant) sitting on the ground. This is also the time of year to be alert for the largest falcon, the Gyrfalcon. They can be seen on power poles and seem to prefer an area near open bodies of water where they can pick off ducks. If you are out in the plains, watch for Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings mixed in with flocks of Horned Larks.

Rosy-Finches, Black, Brown-capped and Gray-crowned, are most easily found in the winter at some bird feeders. In recent years, Allenspark, Colorado, in Boulder County, and specifically the Fawn Brook Inn, has been a reliable place to see these finches as well as Evening Grosbeaks and sometimes Pine Grosbeaks. If you go to the Fawn Brook Inn to watch their many feeders, consider bringing some birdseed along to donate to the cause. Georgetown and Silver Plume have also entertained Rosy-Finches if someone there is feeding birds.

Red Crossbills, and very infrequently, White-winged Crossbills, can sometimes be found in large urban cemeteries with mature spruce trees. Also, keep your eyes open for Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in clumps of large-diameter pines along the Front Range. You can key in on fresh sap-wells and/or the bird's habit of drilling holes in a spiral around the tree. Canyon City and Pueblo City Park have been a good place for sapsuckers in recent years.

If you see flocks of Cedar Waxwings, make sure to sift through them for Bohemian Waxwings. There have been big invasions of Bohemian Waxwings in recent years. They like juniper berries and crabapples as well as other berries.

There are good places to look for waterfowl and gulls along the front range. A spotting scope is almost always needed when looking at waterfowl at lakes and reservoirs. Places to consider include: Valmont Reservoir in Boulder County, Hamilton Reservoir at the Rawhide Power Plant, 18 miles north of Ft. Collins in Larimer County near Wyoming, if the observation area is open, Pueblo State Park, west of Pueblo, Cherry Creek State Park in Arapahoe County, Chatfield State Park in Jefferson and Douglas Counties, and the South Platte River, south of 88th in Thornton and continuing to south of 74th in Denver County.

If you want to make an out of town trip, the Bosque del Apache NWR, south of Socorro, NM, is a great place for a spectacle of Snow and Ross's Geese as well as other waterfowl and thousands of Sandhill Cranes.

I'd like to thank Dick Schottler, Dave Leatherman and Karl Stetcher for their contributions to this month's column.

Urban Denver Christmas Count, January 1 2009

We invite everybody to participate – beginners, intermediate, and advanced. The more eyes we have, the more birds we see. And we like to encourage people to get involved. Start the New Year with a half day or whole day effort—a good way to start your New Year's List!

The count covers a circle with a 15-mile diameter that includes the Platte River from North City limits to Mississippi, west to Buckley Field and Rocky Mtn. Arsenal.

After the count, at 5pm a **Pot Luck** at Casey Davenport's, 415 South High (five blocks west of University, about two blocks south of Alameda); please call Urling (303-814-2723) or Casey (303-744-0613) so we can count you in on the chili pot, Urling's brownies, Casey's hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie, or finger foods.

Count Leader, Hugh Kingery 303-814-2723

Area Location	Telephone	Leader	
South Platte (south) to Confluence Park	303-798-8072	Doris Cruze	Some walking
South Platte (central)	303-744-0613	Casey Davenport	Some walking
Confluence Park to Riverside Cemetery			
South Platte (north)	303-278-8035	Dick Schottler	Walking
[Rocky Mtn. Arsenal	303-814-2723	Urling Kingery	Walking <i>Full – we'll take names for a waitlist.</i>
Commerce City/Montbello	303-287-1644	Jackie King	Car
Sand Creek/Tollgate Creek,	303-680-3381	Randy Lentz	Walking
Bluff Lake, & Aurora	303-699-1721	Buzz Schaumberg	
Cherry Creek Res.	303-791-6204	Bob Brown	Some walking
Kent School, S/Hampden	303-757-7000	Lynn Willcockson	Some walking
SE Denver, N/Hampden	Need Leader		
Cherry Creek, dam to	303-422-3728	Paul Slingsby	7-mile walk, paslingsby@comcast.net
University Blvd.			
[Fairmont, Lowry Field ** Full **	303-979-6211	Tuesday Birders	Car, some walking]
City Park/Park Hill	720-482-8454	Kevin Corwin	Car, some walking
Botanic Gardens,	303-777-3337	Barbara Masoner	Car, some walking
Denver Country Club, Wash. Park			

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

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Lark Bunting Editor/Webmaster

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Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Dick Kolbe, Dick Schottler
and Alison Hiff.

The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$25.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is now mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submittals, and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is preferred.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80128, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dachcook@comcast.net

Feb, May, August, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dachcook@comcast.net

Mar, Jun, September, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Our web site www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert, 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check the Bird Alert number for last minute trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750, www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 and 7:30 pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7:30 pm, and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats near Denver. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge (January 07) is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver. The *Lark Bunting*, the DFO monthly newsletter, is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members.

Denver Field Ornithologists

2009 Membership Application

Please indicate whether this is a ☐ **New Membership** or a ☐ **Renewal**

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

One Year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) **\$20.00**

One Year Family Membership (First Class Mail Lark Bunting is \$10 more) **\$30.00**

Student/Youth Membership (age 21 or younger) **\$5**

First class mailing of field trip reports—for those without internet access or who want the paper reports. **\$10 in addition to membership fee**

Online reports are free from the web site dfobirders.org

Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$____

With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site

Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$____

DFO awards grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats as well as preservation.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

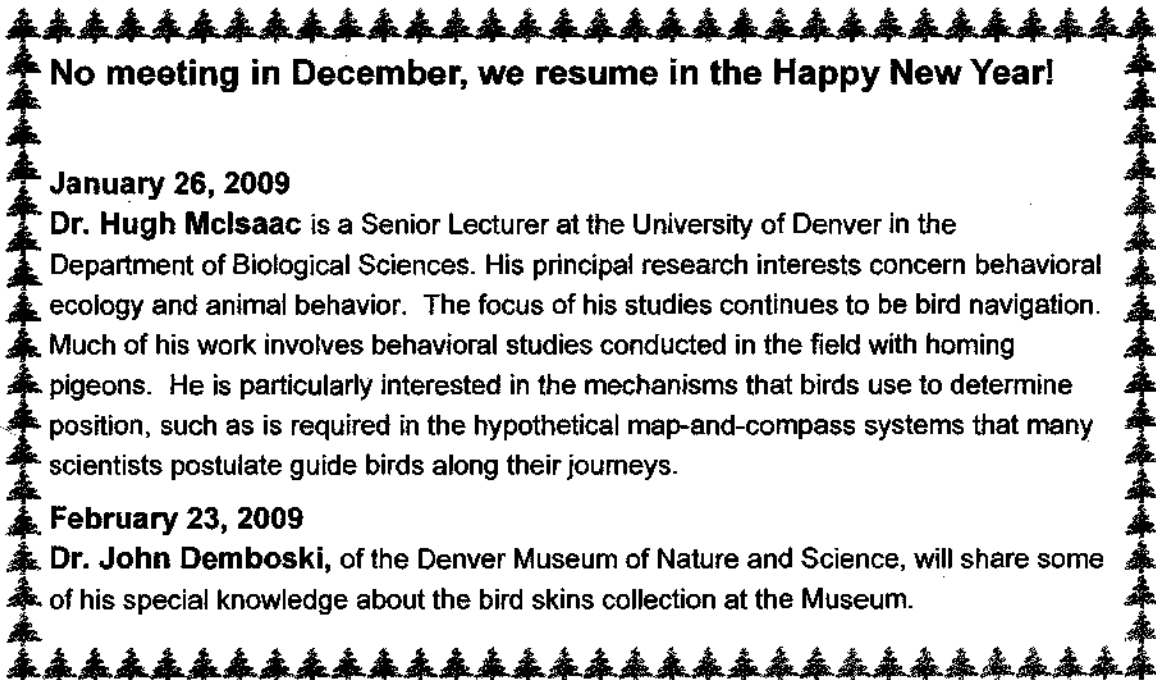
Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting: E-Mail Address _____

**Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Burger, 10826 E. Maplewood Place, Englewood, CO 80111-5742**

Dated Material

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place,
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



No meeting in December, we resume in the Happy New Year!

January 26, 2009
Dr. Hugh McIsaac is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Denver in the Department of Biological Sciences. His principal research interests concern behavioral ecology and animal behavior. The focus of his studies continues to be bird navigation. Much of his work involves behavioral studies conducted in the field with homing pigeons. He is particularly interested in the mechanisms that birds use to determine position, such as is required in the hypothetical map-and-compass systems that many scientists postulate guide birds along their journeys.

February 23, 2009
Dr. John Demboski, of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, will share some of his special knowledge about the bird skins collection at the Museum.



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

February 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44 Number 2

One Hundred Years (and counting) of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science's Ornithological Collection with Dr. John Demboski: February 23 DFO Meeting

Dr. John Demboski the Curator of Vertebrate Zoology at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science will share with the Denver Field Ornithologists some of the highlights from the over 100 year history of, and some of the keen samples from, the ornithological collection of the Museum.

His fantastic presentation of slides and actual samples will include:

- a survey of some of the interesting and more scientifically significant specimens/objects found in the collection;
- a description of what is happening now with the collection (touching on some of the curation issues, growth of the collection and some of the related Museum projects with the collection);
- the use of the collection by museum staff, museum members, ornithologists (professionals and more casual ornithologists); and, a vision and description of the future of the collection.

Besides this fascinating lecture and presentation, DFO members will have the opportunity to examine up close a number of various specimens and objects from the collection. Many (if not most of these) will be those not often seen by the public during their day-to-day visits to the Museum so this will be a fantastic opportunity that you will not want to

Continued on page 3

February Field Trips

Sunday, February 1 *Cherry Creek Reservoir*

Leader: Mary Burger, 303-771-3431. Meet leader at 0800 at the west entrance of park. Go east from Yosemite St. on Union Ave. past Cherry Creek High School. Bring snack, lunch, and drinking as trip will be a ¾ day trip. Dress warmly! State Parks Pass required.

Saturday, February 7 *Longmont Area*

Leader: Chris Owens, 303-772-6048. View the birds and wildlife in Longmont. Meet leader at 0800 at Jim Hamm Nature Center – From I-25 take exit 240. Go west 4 miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld Co. Line Road, then 2 miles north to park on left at E. 17th Ave. Trip will end around noon, so lunch is optional, but bring snacks and drinking water. Be sure to dress for changing weather. Will carpool as needed.

Sunday, February 8 *Wheat Ridge Greenbelt*

Leader: Patty Echelmeyer, 303-233-4947. Meet leader at 0900 at Prospect Park lake, south of West 44th Ave. just east of Robb St. This will be an easy walk along mostly wheelchair accessible trails and will finish by noon so lunch is optional. Do bring snacks and drinking water.

Saturday, February 14 *Bird Watching for the Novice*

Leader: Karleen Schofield, 303-936-8661. Meet leader at 0900 at the Belmar Historic Park, 800 South

Continued on next page

February Field Trips, continued

Wadsworth Blvd at West Ohio Ave. Turn west on Ohio Ave. and go two blocks straight ahead into Irongate parking lot and to the lake. Trip will end before noon so lunch is optional. This trip will be an easy hike on wheelchair accessible trails to study and learn about the various birds that winter in the Denver area. Bring binoculars, field guide and drinking water. If the weather seems questionable, call the leader before going.

Sunday, February 15

Roxborough State Park

Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072. Meet leader at 0800 at the Visitor's Center for a three and a half-hour walking tour on an easy trail. Participants should see Golden Eagles and species common in the foothills. State Parks Pass required or \$5 entrance fee per car. Lunch will be optional but there is a beautiful place to sit on the patio and watch the birds as you eat lunch. Take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield S.P. to Waterton Rd on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles). This is an excellent trip for novice birders and new members.

Saturday, February 21

South Platte River Wanderings

Leader: Ed Holub, 303-979-2194. Meet leader at 0730 at the South Platte Park's Carson Nature Center, north of Mineral Ave., 1 block west of S. Santa Fe Drive. Trip will end at noon, but bring snacks and drinking water. Participants will bird South Platte Park, McClellan Reservoir and other places of interest in the surrounding area.

Sunday, February 22

Roam the Prairies

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Sanders, 303-278-7172. This trip will go into the northeastern plains of Colorado looking for wintering raptors. Meet leaders at 0730 at Division of Wildlife, 6060 No. Broadway - Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right. Trip will roam the northeastern plains of Colorado looking for wintering raptors, snow buntings and longspurs. Trip could continue as late as 3 pm, so bring lunch, snacks and drinking water. May need Wildlife pass and/or State Parks pass.

Saturday, February 28

Chatfield State Park

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748. Meet leader at 0800 at Platte River Parking lot. As this is a half-day trip, lunch is optional. State Parks pass is required. Please call leader if going.

Mini-Grants Available for Local Events

Neighborhood activities focus on birds and nature

Ithaca, NY--The Cornell Lab of Ornithology invites organizations and educators to apply for its Celebrate Urban Birds project mini-grants. Mini-grants average \$100 to \$500 and help fund neighborhood events across North America. Organizations working with traditionally underserved communities are strongly urged to apply.

Celebrate Urban Birds is a free year-round project that collects information from everyday people about 16 species of birds that may be found in urban areas. Participants spend 10 minutes watching birds in their neighborhood and report their observations online at www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org. This information helps scientists better understand how birds survive in cities and make use of greens spaces, including parks and gardens.

A local Celebrate Urban Birds event connects the arts, music, dance, and gardening with birds and science. Celebrate Urban Birds mini-grants could be used to support a bird-activity day at a local museum, afterschool, library, or community center, or fund art and gardening activities at your club, business, school, senior center, or neighborhood.

To qualify for a mini-grant, please plan to: hold a Celebrate Urban Birds event in 2009, introduce the public/youth to birds, collect Celebrate Urban Birds data and inspire others to observe birds and collect data, distribute Celebrate Urban Birds kits (with posters, seeds, and more), integrate the arts, integrate gardening/habitat creation, get people outside. **Application deadline is February 15, 2009**

To apply for a mini-grant, please visit www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org. No experience with birds required.

February Feature Program, continued from page 1

miss. Dr. Demoski received his B.S. from Purdue University in 1987 and his doctorate from the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 1999. Dr. Demboski also conducted postdoctoral research at the University of Idaho and Louisiana State University. Before joining the Museum in August 2006, Dr. Demboski was an assistant professor at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (2002–2006).

Dr. Demboski's area of research is mammalian systematics, phylogeography, and conservation genetics. His research program is specimen-based and heavily dependent on fieldwork with a focus on montane areas of the western United States. Projects to date have investigated evolutionary relationships of shrews, chipmunks, voles, and hares. Dr. Demboski's fieldwork has taken him to most states in the western United States including Alaska, western Canada, Mexico, Far East Russia, the Philippines, and Paraguay.

Future Dates and Speakers: Mark your calendar now for the following fourth Mondays of the month. Dr. Albert E. Floyd (also known as Ted Floyd) will present some new thoughts on Chipping Sparrows and other avian subjects on March 23. The 2007-2008 speaker series will wrap up on April 27 with Chris Pague from the Nature Conservancy, addressing some of the world conservation challenges involving grasslands and the bird species that live in them.



Separate Note: Our next DFO Meeting will be Monday, January 26 and will feature a presentation on Avian Navigation by Dr. Hugh McIsaac of the University of Denver. The meeting will start at 7:30 PM. See you all there!

All DFO member are welcome to another free lecture and brief membership meeting on Monday, February 23. DFO meetings are interesting and the company of bird watchers is always worthwhile to keep. DOORS OPEN BY 7:00pm AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30pm. Thus, mark your calendar for each meeting and plan to come by 7:15pm on these dates. Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium in Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7pm and 7:30pm. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Tricky Birds, Bird By Ear

Upcoming metro-area classes - South Platte Park, in Littleton, is once again offering 'off season' indoor classes to help you prep for birdier times.

Tricky Birds ID Series starts Thursday, Feb 12 and runs four Thursdays from 700 pm - 8:30 pm at the Buck Recreation Center in Littleton. Each week features several groups (ie raptors, shorebirds, etc.) We use field guides, powerpoint, and group discussion to practice differentiating species. This class is for the birder who can differentiate a sparrow from a warbler but perhaps is looking for the 'what next' once that is done. Find classes at www.sspr.org/nature, or call 303-347-5999.

Bird By Ear returns on Sunday Mar 8 from 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm at the Carson Nature Center in Littleton. Using sound and images, we'll practice ways of hearing, categorizing, and remembering bird calls. For more information call Skot Latona, Supervisor of Interpretation, 303-730-1022 or skotl@sspr.org

Field Trip Summaries for December 2008

December 6, Saturday *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Mary C Burger. **Observers:** Derek Hankins, Pauline Ide, Lois Levinson, Bob Shade, Connie and Rick Steinkamp, David Weimer. **Time:** 0830-1400. **Distance:** 5 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, lake, elevation 5550'. **Weather:** 30-50°F, wind 5-10mph. **Totals:** 48 species, 3137 individuals.

Highlights: We discovered an injured immature Red-tail Hawk and called the Park Ranger. Along the way we met DFO members Nina Rough and Don Beltz and we include some of their sightings. Two Dunlin were seen earlier on the southeast shore of the lake. We missed them.

December 7, Sunday *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Tim Smart. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Diana King, Michael King, Edie Israel, Elena Klaver, Dick Prickett, Allen Hagood, Polleke Siraa, Barbara Thomas, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp. **Time:** 0830-1630.

Habitat: Field and lakes. **Weather:** Cloudy with clearing in pm, 39-64°F, south wind, 8-9mph. **Totals:** 54 species, 25994 individuals.

December 13, Saturday *South Platte River (SOU)*

Leader(s): Paul Slingsby. **Observers:** Diane Carter, Derek Hankins, Barbara Thomas, Jim Duggan, Nina Routh, Christy Honnen, Marilyn Binkley, Meredith Anderson, Neil Montague, Toni Rautus, Karen Bellina. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian elevation 5200'. **Weather:** 40-50°F, southwest wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 31 species, 1306 individuals.

Note: There were very few Rock Pigeons. Why? Interesting we had a female Yellow-rumped Warbler.

December 21, Sunday *Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)* Report not available at time of printing.

December 27, Saturday *Easter Boulder County (EAS)*

Leader(s): Mike Serruto. **Observers:** Norm Lewis, Jim Duggan, Paul Slingsby, Nina Rough, Meredith Anderson. **Time:** 0830-1500. **Distance:** 25 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Agricultural, riparian, reservoir. **Weather:** 9-35°F, west wind up to 20mph. **Totals:** 31 species, 250,422 individuals.

December 28, Sunday *Carson Nature Center/South Platte River Greenway (CAR)*

Leader(s): Dee DeJong. **Observers:** Leslie Gerard, RD Ginn, Jean Eddins, Dick Prickett, Marju Montrose, Mary Keithler, Peggy Wait, Jim Fischer, Chuck Lourie, Alison Kondler, Elizabeth Maslow, Richard Maslow, Don Beltz. **Time:** 0900-1130. **Weather:** Cool, calm, 28-35°F. **Totals:** 36 species, 440 individuals.

Tuesday Birders

December 2 *Old Stone House (OLD)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 45 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 3.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, with meadows, elevation 5300'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 54-66°F, variable wind, gusts to 15 mph. **Totals:** 20 species, 410 individuals.

December 9 *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)* Cancelled due to snowy weather.

Details of all the field trips are posted at www.dfopbirders.org

December Additional Reports

Species	Dates	Nr seen	Location	County	Observers & notes
Grebe, red-necked	12/5	2	Chatfield Reservoir	Jefferson	Joey Kellner
Swan, tundra	12/5	6ad, 3imm	Chatfield Reservoir	Jefferson	Kellner, Joey
Swan, tundra	12/5	6	Bear Creek Lake Park	Jefferson	Mike Henwood
Goose, greater white-fronted	12/5	1	Bear Creek Lake Park	Jefferson	Mike Henwood
Duck, Long-tailed	12/6	1m, 1f	Chatfield Reservoir	Douglas	Kellner, Joey
Dunlin	12/31	1	Chatfield Reservoir	Douglas	Mike Henwood, Rob Raker
Northern Mockingbird	12/20	1	Green Gables CC	Jefferson	Mike Henwood, Karen Bicket, Rick Creswell, Joyce & Francis Commerson, Rob Raker, Harriet Stratton, Karen von Saltza
Warbler, pine	12/8	1	Overland Pond Park, S. Patte River/W. Florida	Denver	Mike Henwood, Doris Cruze, Dave Hill, Mary Keithler, Tom Parchman, Harriet Stratton.

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Welcome New Members!

David Weimer, 3843 S Elm St., Denver 80237, 303.757.4389

Richard Creswell, 2557 S Dover St. #88, Lakewood 80227, 720.963.9163

Joan Kluck, 4383 S Blackhawk Way, Aurora 80015, 303.693.7826 (gift membership from Leslie Madsen & Paul Kluck)

Contributions to the Rare Bird Alert Fund

Jan Justice-Waddington, Mary Ann Rose, Dan & Renee Brachear, Doug & Jan Hodous

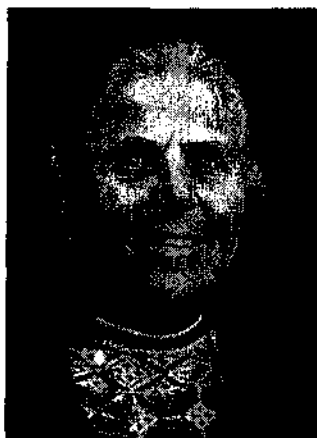
Monna Krebs, Pat & Ed Joy, Wayne Wathen, Audrey Gilden, Kevin Corwin, Peggy Gonder, Kitsi Atkinson & Tom Pool, Melissa Smith, Lynn & Elizabeth Willcockson, John (Dan) Brook, Cheryl Teuton, Peter Mulholland, Martha McCauley, Joan Kluck, Ted & Nancy Pinkert, Chuck Lowrie, Tina Jones, Tim Davis, Joyce Takamine, Lee & Linda Farrell, Ann Southcott, Joan & Jack Whiting, Karel Buckley

Contributions to the Educational Endowment Fund

Sarah Bradley, Dan & Renee Brachear, Monna Krebs, Wayne Wathen, Audrey Gilden, Kevin Corwin, Merikay Haggerty, Peggy Gonder, Susan Clasen, Kitsi Atkinson & Tom Pool, Judy Lane, Melissa Smith, Lynn & Elizabeth Willcockson, Paul Slingsby, Ted & Nancy Pinkert, Tina Jones, Lee & Linda Farrell, Barney & Pat Poole, Joan & Jack Whiting.

Thank you all—and for those of you donating to the EEF, we trust you enjoy an example of the fruit of your support on the next page.

White-tailed Ptarmigan, Ghosts of the Alpine Tundra



Thanks to the generosity of its members, DFO (through donations to the Educational Endowment Fund) is able to award grants for the public education about birds every year. Last year, we were able to join other conservation-minded organizations in supporting the development of an informative and colorful brochure about White-tailed Ptarmigans that is now available for distribution. The author is Joyce Gellhorn, a Boulder County naturalist, who along with researcher Clait Braun and photographer Calvin Whitehall, have researched, photographed, and loved these special birds for many years.

Below, the main text of the brochure is reprinted with the permission of Joyce Gellhorn. Although the brochure is graced with 19 beautiful photos, the Lark Bunting is including a single compilation photo from Ms. Gellhorn's collection which demonstrates some of the adaptive plumage changes the ptarmigan sports as it seeks to remain camouflaged in the harsh and changing environment of the tundra. At this time,

Ms. Gellhorn plans to distribute this informative brochure through the Clear Creek Forest Service and Rocky Mountain National Park.

Life at the Top

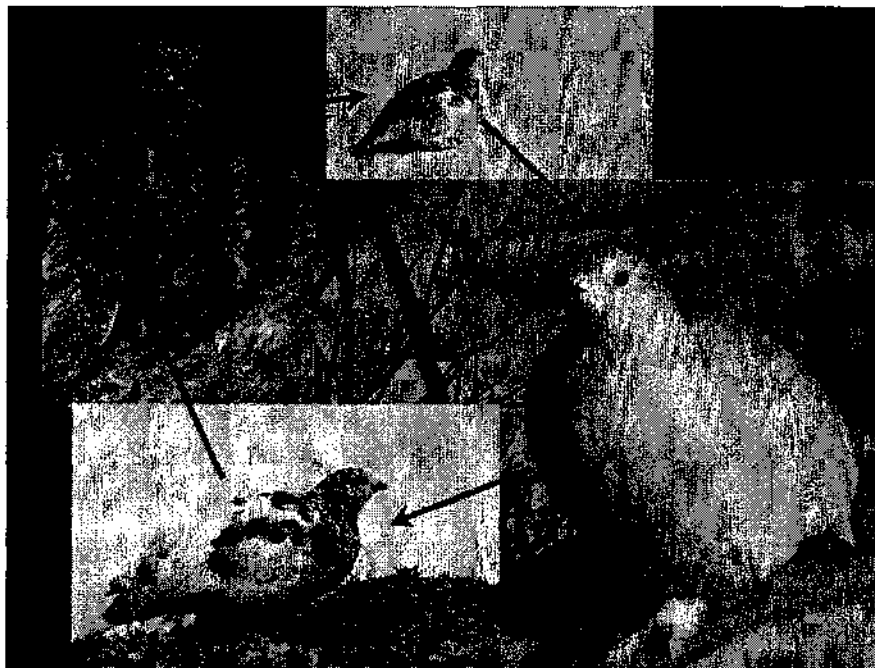
Ptarmigan are the only bird to live year round on the tundra above timberline. In summer they are at home in moist, rock-strewn mountain meadows. In winter, they seek shelter from the frigid winds, hiding in the willows or burrowing in the snow.

Why call them "ghosts" of the tundra?

Some naturalists call ptarmigan "ghosts" of the alpine tundra because they can be so difficult to see. Their plumage is a different color each season – mottled brown in summer, white in winter, and both in spring and fall. When ptarmigan sense danger they often stay perfectly still – a behavior that helps them elude both predators and people.

What Do Ptarmigan Find to Eat?

In summer the alpine tundra is rich in plant life. Ptarmigan enjoy a diet of insects, leaves, blossoms and seeds of alpine plants. They particularly like dwarf clover, alpine avens, mountain dryad, and bistort. In winter, when much of the ground is covered in snow, ptarmigan eat primarily willow buds and smaller twigs. Willow buds are rich in nutrients, including oils and proteins, needed for surviving the harsh conditions.



Ptarmigan Through the Year

- * **Summer:** Summers are short, and ptarmigan stay busy finding mates, raising young and preparing for the next

White-tailed Ptarmigan, continued

winter. The female builds a simple nest and lays six or seven eggs. While she incubates the eggs, the male defends the territory. Once the chicks hatch, males move to summer feeding areas and hens raise the chicks.

- * **Winter:** Several adaptations help ptarmigan to endure the long, cold winter. Feathered feet function like snowshoes, allowing the birds to travel on top of the snow. Walking, rather than flying, conserves energy. White feathers provide optimal insulation. Roosting among willows or sleeping under a blanket of snow helps them maintain body heat.

Watching for Ptarmigan in Colorado

Colorado offers plenty of opportunity for exploring high peaks. Several places provide roadside access to the alpine environment. While it's not hard to get to ptarmigan habitat, watching ptarmigan responsibly does require a little effort.

White-tailed ptarmigan blend so well with their environment that they can be hard to find until you are almost on top of them. Ptarmigan may respond to disturbance by staying still rather than flying away – leading some people to believe they are tame. But “freezing” behavior is evidence of stress. Causing ptarmigans to flush – to run or to fly away – can be particularly harmful. In spring or summer, eggs or chicks can be left unprotected. In winter, even a short flight uses energy reserves needed for survival.

Help protect white-tailed ptarmigan by following these tips:

- * **Stick to the trail.** Avoid the willow shrubs. Willows provide both food and cover (protection) for white-tailed ptarmigan year-round.
- * **Stay alert for signs of ptarmigan.** If you are not paying special attention, you may not see the birds until you have already disturbed them. Be especially careful around willow areas, and learn to recognize signs of activity like tracks and droppings.
- * **Watch from a distance.** If you are lucky enough to see a ptarmigan, back away. Don't let their stillness fool you; birds will be stressed if you get too close. *When you cause the bird to change its behavior in any way, you are too close.* Use binoculars for watching and a telephoto lens for photography.
- * **Leave your dog at home.** Even the best-behaved dogs can stress, harm or even kill a ptarmigan before you can stop them.

Thank you, DFO contributors to our education endowment fund. We will keep you up-to-date on the good you are doing. For those wishing to contribute, please send your check to Lynn Wilcockson at 2698 S. Niagara, Denver, CO 80224. For those wishing to apply for a grant, please download and complete the Education Endowment Fund application from www.dfobirders.org or call Tina Jones at 303.794.2647.

For more information about ptarmigans including large, full-color and stunning photographs of ptarmigans on every page, see the book: “White-tailed Ptarmigan: Ghosts of the Alpine Tundra” by Joyce Gellhorn. This book is a modestly priced month-by-month photographic essay about the white-tailed ptarmigan in its seasonally challenging tundra habitat. Available at Barnes and Noble or by calling 300-258-5830. Jefferson and Boulder Counties keep it in their libraries also. Joyce's web site, which is really quite lovely, can be accessed at www.joycegellhorn.com

By Carol Blackard

What Birds to Look for in February—and Where to Look for Them

DFO Birders,

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In February, the average high in Denver is: 47 degrees and the average low is: 20 degrees, up 4 degrees on both high and low from January, though we all know it can be considerably warmer and colder.

It is certainly still winter so what I said about January is also true for February. When you are out on the plains and in the foothills, keep your eyes open for early bluebirds. Canyon City and Pueblo City Park are presently entertaining sapsuckers in the yellow pines and other pines that can be found in both places. Tunnel Drive in Canyon City is a reliable spot for Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Canyon Towhee. A Golden-crowned Sparrow has wintered there with the flocks of White-crowned Sparrows.

Continue to check the Platte River between 88th and 74th. Quite a few good birds are appearing there now, including Barrow's Goldeneye and Glaucous Gull. Pueblo Lake State Park can have 10 species of gulls this time of year. Start at the tires at the marina below the Visitors Center and don't forget to check the river below the dam for Black Phoebe and other wintering birds when you go from the south side to the north side of the lake. Valco Ponds east of the park is a good place for sparrows and other brush seeking species.

Great Horned Owls start laying eggs as early as mid-January so you may hear and see increased activity by these owls. These owls nest in many places in Colorado from mountain forests and across the plains. There is a good chance there is a pair nesting near you. Where the owls can't find an abandoned hawk and magpie's nests, they can nest on the ground. Both eagles, Golden and Bald, will start nesting in February. Barr Lake has had Bald Eagles nesting there for many years. However, when the easily observed nest blew down, the eagles moved closer to I 76 and in a location that is harder to observe. We will have to wait and see if the birds move back to the site that is easily seen from the gazebo.



This is a great time of year to find up to six species of geese by scanning through the huge flocks that winter in Colorado. Weld and Larimer Counties are an especially good place to find Canada, Cackling, Snow, Ross's, Greater White-fronted Geese and Brant.

Winter is a good time of year to learn about nests while the branches are bare and the nests from last summer are visible. Try and pick up discarded monofilament fishing line & red plastic binder twine during your winter walks, as these are harmful to birds.

The Bosque del Apache NWR, south of Socorro, NM, is still a great place for a spectacle of Snow and Ross's Geese as well as other waterfowl and thousands of Sandhill Cranes in February.

Don't forget the importance of watering (during extended winter thaw periods) trees and shrubs that you have planted in your yards for birds. There is a fact sheet available on-line from CSU Cooperative Extension entitled "Winter Watering".

I'd like to thank Joey Kellner, Dave Leatherman and Karl Stetcher for their contributions to this month's column.

By Ira Sanders

Memories of Bill Brockner

In the summer of 1915 Teddy Roosevelt had only been back from his Amazon jungle expedition and the River of Doubt for a year; Charles Lindbergh was only 13 and wouldn't pilot the Spirit of St. Louis across the Atlantic for 12 more years; and Winston William "Bill" Brockner made his auspicious entrance into the world. Bill's debut occurred in Buffalo, New York, that July, and eleven years later, after an encounter with a mounted Ivory-billed Woodpecker in the Buffalo Museum of Natural History, a lifelong love of birds took wing. Bill grew up and was schooled in Buffalo, and married Sylvia Booth there in 1940; served in the U. S. Army in North Africa and Italy in W. W. II; moved to Evergreen in 1965; and worked as an accountant and a corporate executive for General Motors throughout his career.

However, Bill's passion was birding! He birded all across North America, missing Hawaii, but including seven trips to Attu in the Aleutians. On business trips, when others were having their after work cocktails in the bar, Bill would shed his tie, grab his binoculars and head off to the nearest marsh, meadow, or wood lot in search of his feathered friends. He was the second person to record 700 species on the continent, and in fact, was chagrined by the fact that he reached or passed 700 four times thanks to the actions of ornithological "lumpers and splitters." His last recorded species, number 754, was the cackling goose, and this puts him in the top 100 listers in the American Birding Association.

Bill had many high points in his birding, but he would say without hesitation that his favorite bird was the Steller's



Sea Eagle which he saw (while ignoring the grizzlies) in Juneau, Alaska. He also had some low points such as spending 1000+ hours in search of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker which always eluded him, as did the Eskimo Curlew, and just missing a Bachman's Warbler by thirty seconds.

Bill rubbed elbows with the likes of Alfred Bailey, Thompson Marsh, and Roger Tory Peterson whom he had known since childhood. He served on Peterson's Institute board and behind the scenes he was a member of a small group that supported the creation of the ABA in the 1960's. In 1969 in Evergreen he helped Sylvia found the Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society.

Bill's infectious laugh, optimistic attitude, outgoing personality, and love of birds won over many new birders, some of whom went on to become professional ornithologists. Possibly his greatest strength in the fields of bird and habitat conservation was his ability to quietly encourage and support others in their diverse endeavors to study and to conserve the natural world. He had a knack for saying the right thing at the right time to the right person, only not just to one person, but rather to many. He had an unbelievable network of "bird friendly people" around Colorado, the United States, and Canada.

In Bill's later years when he was confined to a walker or a wheel chair, his enthusiasm never waned and his numerous telephone contacts allowed him to track "every" bird in Evergreen. Even as his body failed him, his mind was sharp right up to the end, and just two days before he died Kevin Cook and I visited him and found he was eager to talk about birds, to answer bird questions, and to hear the recounting of our latest birding adventures. Bill's soul took wing on November 19, 2008, and the Celebration of Life at Evergreen's Lake House in December was a fitting tribute to him for all the lives he and Sylvia have touched. Bill was a giant in the birding community and he will be sorely missed.

By Chris A. Blakeslee

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

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Joyce Takamine, Dick Kolbe, Dick Schottler
and Alison Hilf.

The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$25.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is now mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submittals, and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is preferred.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80128, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcocook@comcast.net

Feb, May, August, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcocook@comcast.net

Mar, Jun, September, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Our web site www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert, 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check the Bird Alert number for last minute trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750, www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 and 7:30 pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7:30 pm, and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats near Denver. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge (January 07) is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver. The *Lark Bunting*, the DFO monthly newsletter, is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members.

Denver Field Ornithologists

2009 Membership Application

Please indicate whether this is a ☐ **New Membership** or a ☐ **Renewal**

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

One Year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting)	\$20.00
One Year Family Membership (First Class Mail Lark Bunting is \$10 more)	\$30.00
Student/Youth Membership (age 21 or younger)	\$5
First class mailing of field trip reports—for those without internet access or who want the paper reports.	\$10 in addition to membership fee
Online reports are free from the web site dfobirders.org	
Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert	\$____
<i>With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site</i>	
Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund	\$____
<i>DFO awards grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats as well as preservation.</i>	
Name: _____	
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____	

Electronic Lark Bunting: E-Mail Address _____

**Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Burger, 10826 E. Maplewood Place, Englewood, CO 80111-5742**

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE FEBRUARY 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS								TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL
	1	7	8	14	15	21	22	28	3	10	17	24	
	CHE	LON	WHE	BEL	ROX	SOU	LAK	CHA	CHA	RED	BEL	CHE	
Pied-billed Grebe	2					4						1	7
Great Blue Heron		3					1	1				1	6
Greater White-fronted Goose		3											3
Snow Goose							3000						3000
Ross's Goose							12						12
Canada Goose	235	400	100	130	15	250	5000	77	1050		185	75	7517
Cackling Goose						2	600						602
Gadwall		24	25	2		15	6	7	30		5	19	133
American Wigeon		18	20			25		18					81
Mallard	55	300	60	35	6	50	100	27	47		36	22	738
Northern Shoveler		20	30	120		65	20		2		74		331
Northern Pintail		6						11					17
Green-winged Teal		2	3			10	1	15	2		2	4	39
Canvasback	6						20						26
Redhead		5				45	120	60					230
Ring-necked Duck				3		10	10	25			10		58
Lesser Scaup	2		2	5		3					2		14
Bufflehead	2			9		20	6	6			10		53
Common Goldeneye	2	100	15	2		20	50		4		4	2	199
Barrow's Goldeneye		1											1
Hooded Merganser	7	1	9	4		12			2		5		40
Common Merganser	10	600	7			25	10	7	2			12	673
Bald Eagle	1	30					4	2	2			3	42
Northern Harrier	2	4					3		2				11
Sharp-shinned Hawk			1										1
Cooper's Hawk	1						1						2
Red-tailed Hawk	3	3			2	3	15	6	10	1		9	52
western races	3												(3)
"Harian's" race												1	(1)
Rough-legged Hawk					2		1						3
Golden Eagle					1								1
American Kestrel	3	1				3	16		1		3	1	28
Ring-necked Pheasant							2						2
Virginia Rail								1					1
American Coot	9		10			20		1				4	44
Killdeer	1	1											2
Long-billed Dowitcher													0
Wilson's Snipe				1				2			1		4
Red-necked Phalarope													0
Ring-billed Gull	80	150	25	58	3	55	350	25	110		60	67	983
Herring Gull	1	4					1	1	1				8
Thayer's Gull		1											1
Ivory Gull													0
Rock Pigeon		1		30		2	100		2	8	32	4	179
Eurasian Collared-dove		2					10						12
Mourning Dove			2				40				6		48
Great Horned Owl	1						1	1	1				4
Rufous Hummingbird													0
Belted Kingfisher	1					4		1	2			3	11
Downy Woodpecker		1	5		2	4		2	3				17
Hairy Woodpecker													0
Northern Flicker	2	1	10	4	4	6	27	4	4		2	7	71
"Yellow-shafted" race							(2)						(2)
"Red-shafted" race	(2)					(6)	(25)	(4)					(37)
Buff-breasted Flycatcher													0
Northern Shrike	2				1	2	2	1		1			7
Blue Jay		1	5		3		10						19
Western Scrub-Jay					16					8			24

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE FEBRUARY 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS								TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL
	1	7	8	14	15	21	22	28	3	10	17	24	
	CHE	LON	WHE	BEL	ROX	SOU	LAK	CHA	CHA	RED	BEL	CHE	
Black-billed Magpie	15		2		2	1	8	11	9	4		12	64
American Crow	8	6	8	5	8	2	10	8	50	38	18	11	188
Common Raven				1				2		1			4
Horned Lark		15					500	1					516
Tree Swallow								1					1
Black-capped Chickadee	8		6	4	10	4	6	7	4	2		6	55
Mountain Chickadee					1								1
Bush-tit								1					1
White-breasted Nuthatch			2		1			1	2				6
Canyon Wren										2			2
Marsh Wren								2					2
American Dipper										1			1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			2										2
Townsend's Solitaire					1		10	1	1	5			18
American Robin	30	1	8	6	8	2	250	12	5	5		11	338
European Starling	80	230	78	7		30	1		17	8		138	567
Spotted Towhee					2					1			3
American Tree Sparrow	4						10		4			6	24
Fox Sparrow													0
Song Sparrow		1		1		5	2	8	2	2		1	22
White-crowned Sparrow		5					15						20
Dark-eyed Junco				5	13		30		3	19		1	71
"Slate-colored" race					2								(2)
"Oregon" race					2								(2)
"Pink-sided" race					9				2				(11)
"Gray-headed" race										1			(1)
Lapland Longspur							3						3
Red-winged Blackbird		30	30	7		30	100	5	1		2	6	211
Western Meadowlark							20	1					21
Yellow-headed Blackbird		8											8
Great-tailed Grackle		20											20
House Finch	20	2	31	18	6	5	40	5	3	12	3	3	148
American Goldfinch	15				5	1	2						28
House Sparrow		2				10	40		3			8	63
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	586	2003	494	457	110	743	10586	367	1381	118	460	437	17,740
TOTAL SPECIES	30	38	26	22	22	33	48	38	32	17	19	27	77
OBSERVATION LEGEND:	a=adult, f=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only, c=calling, s=singing, boldface=rare/unusual, + =also/in addition to, x=individual data incomplete/not enumerated												

Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)

Longmont Area (LON)

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)

Belmar Park (BEL)

Roxborough State Park (ROX)

South Platte River Park: Littleton Historical Museum (SOU)

Lake Jackson State Park, Prewitt Reservoirs, NE Prairies (LAK)

Chatfield State Park (CHA)

Red Rocks and Morrison Parks (RED)

Belmar Historic Park (BEL)



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

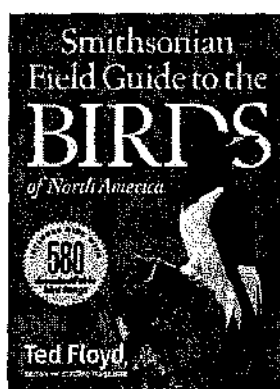


March 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44 Number 3

Birding at Night: The Ultimate Frontier
Chipping Sparrows and Other Things That Go Bump in the Night...
Presented by Ted Floyd, Monday March 23



Please arrive early for a special event. At 7:00 p.m., Ted will be signing his most recent book, The Smithsonian Field Guide to the Birds of North America (HarperCollins, 2008). The Audubon Society of Greater Denver will have copies of Ted's book on sale. Ted will also have the latest copy of Birding magazine, plus other ABA materials, for you. Bring your own and get it autographed! Or if you are not an ABA member, pick up a free copy of Birding and an ABA membership brochure.

More on Ted's Presentation:

Ted will share his passion (with almost no reasonable limits) for birding at night. Ted mentioned recently, "Unless you are an Arctic Tern, you spend exactly 50% of your life in the night time hours. So much time, so many birds... Seriously, it is a waste of half your life not to go birding at night!" Ted will tell us about the amazing avian nightlife of the Front

Range region: owls and nightjars, for starters; night-herons and rails in our marshes; night-singing flycatchers, spar-

Continued on page 3

March Field Trips

Sunday, March 1

South Platte Park

Leader: Niña Routh, (303)987-8687. Meet Leader at 0830 on the west side of the parking lot north of the Carson Nature Center, at the gazebo. The Nature Center parking lot is VERY small, so please carpool, or park in the RTD lot on the east side between the Park and Aspen Grove. This will be an easy walk of about 2 mi. in search of waterfowl, accipiters, buteos and eagles, and the inevitable surprises! Half-day trip; bring water and snacks, and please call ahead to register.

Saturday, March 7

Allenspark/Estes Park

Leader: Mike Serruto, (303)377-9870. Join Mike for a day-long adventure searching for Rosy Finch, Grosbeaks, Woodpeckers, Nuthatches, Jays and more. Meet Leader at 0830 at the Park 'n Ride at 120th Avenue and Huron Street: from I-25 exit west at exit 223 and proceed to Huron St. (about 0.5 mi.), then turn left (south) on Huron and the next left into the lot. Carpools will be formed here. Call Mike in advance to register. Bring lunch, water, warm clothing and adequate footwear, and a radio if you have one.

Sunday, March 8

Bonny Lake State Park, Yuma County

Leader: Mark Peterson, (719)573-6190, mpeterson33@yahoo.com. Notify Leader to register for this trip. For carpool information from Denver contact Meredith Anderson at (303)280-9576. Mark will meet us at the Foster's

Continued on next page

March Field Trips, continued

Grove Campground at 0800. We'll be looking for Northern Cardinal, Fox Sparrow, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, Lapland Longspur, owls, and eastern species that overlap in this area. Full day trip; bring lunch, plenty of water, snacks and sturdy hikers! Scopes and a radio might be helpful. State Parks pass (or fee) required; make sure you have your 2009 Wildlife Habitat stamp. Note: don't forget that Daylight Saving Time begins at 2am Sunday morning!

Saturday, March 14 Big Dry Creek and Westminster Lakes

Leader: Meredith Anderson, (303)280-8576. Meet Leader at 0800 at the Westminster playground parking lot, on 128th Ave. just east of Zuni Street. We'll spend the morning doing some suburban birding along the creek and check area lakes and ponds for herons and waterfowl. Half-day trip, lunch optional. Please notify leader if you plan to attend.

Sunday, March 15 Weld County Wanderings

Leaders: Tammy and Ira Sanders, (303)278-7172. Meet Leaders at 0700 at the Division of Wildlife parking lot, 6060 N. Broadway (58th Ave. exit from I-25, west a short distance to Broadway and north to the DOW lot on the right). Roam the plains and reservoirs of Weld County in search of raptors, sparrows, longspurs, waterfowl and perhaps some early-arriving shorebirds. Full day trip; bring lunch, water, and dress for changeable weather. State Parks pass (or fee) and Habitat Stamp required. Please notify leaders beforehand if you plan to attend.

Saturday, March 21 Boulder's Walden/Sawhill Ponds and Environs

Leader: Paula Hansley, (720)890-2628. Meet Leader at 0830 at the Cottonwood Marsh parking lot, at the end of a short, signed access road off of 75th Ave. north of Valmont Drive. The awakening marshes tempt birders with returning blackbirds, wrens, sparrows, snipe, rails and herons; in the woods look for woodpeckers, nuthatches and creepers. Half-day trip, to wrap up by 1 p.m. Lunch optional.

Sunday, March 22 Chatfield State Park

Leader: Paul Slingsby, (303)422-3728. Meet Leader at 0800 at the small parking lot on Deer Creek Canyon Road, just west of Wadsworth Blvd. The park's diverse habitat makes for excellent birding year 'round. For this 3/4 day trip bring lunch, water and a scope if you have one; expect lots of leisurely walking. State Parks pass (or fee) required. Please register with leader in advance.

Saturday, March 28 Sedalia Area

Leader: Lynn Willcockson, (303)757-7000. Meet Leader at 0800 at the Sedalia Post Office on Hwy 67 just south of its intersect with Hwy. 85. Half-day trip, lunch optional. We'll see if the Lewis' Woodpeckers have returned! Please notify Leader if you plan to attend.

Sunday, March 29 Bear Creek Lake Park

Leader: Mike Henwood, (303)716-8551 or (303)840-5070 (cell). Meet Leader at 0800 at the entrance to the park. We'll be looking for Buteos, Accipiters, Great-horned Owls, Dippers and riparian dwellers. Half-day trip; bring water and snacks, and be prepared for variable weather. If you do not have an annual pass, a \$5 day pass is required. Please register with Leader in advance.

Results of the 55th Christmas Bird Count have been posted on the web site, www.dfobirders.org, and will be included in next month's issue of the Lark Bunting.

...Things that go Bump in the Night, continued from page 1

rows, thrashers, and others in our forests and grasslands; and, of course, nocturnal migration, the most glorious of all natural phenomena. Ted's presentation will both provide a glimpse into the fascinating nocturnal biology of Colorado's birds and offer us practical tips for finding birds at night. His presentation will also test your high-frequency hearing and give you the opportunity to squint at grainy photos taken at night. You will even learn some astronomy in the process. Most of all, you will come to appreciate that the ultimate of birding adventures is to be had—wait for it—right in your own neighborhood parks, front driveways, and backyards.

And check this out: Much to the shock of the ornithological community, Ted Floyd has actually learned to use Microsoft PowerPoint (like so many other DFO presenters). But beware, this is the first time he is using this audiovisual tool at a DFO meeting and this spectacle could be, ah, spectacular.

More on Ted Floyd: In addition to being the Editor of *Birding*, Ted Floyd has been and will again be one of DFO's favorite speakers. Ted started birding when he was in junior high school. After college (B.A. in Biology, Princeton University) and graduate school (Ph.D. in Ecology, Penn State University), he taught biology at several colleges and universities. Then he migrated into the nonprofit realm, first heading up the Nevada Breeding Bird Atlas for the Great Basin Bird Observatory and now serving as Editor of *Birding*, the flagship publication of the American Birding Association. Ted is also an Instructor with the ABA's Institute for Field Ornithology (IFO) program, and he has served on the boards of several non-profit organizations.

Ted has published more than 125 articles on birds and other aspects of natural history, for popular as well as professional magazines and journals. His recent books include *The Smithsonian Guide* (HarperCollins, 2008—details above!) and *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Nevada* (University of Nevada Press, 2007). He is a frequent speaker at birding festivals and ornithological meetings, and he has led birding trips throughout North America.

Please Note: Our next DFO Meeting will be Monday, February 23 and will feature a presentation on the Denver Museum of Nature and Sciences' Ornithological Collection with Dr. John Demboski. The meeting will start promptly at 7:30pm. See you all there.

All persons are welcome to this free lecture and membership meetings. DFO meetings are interesting and the company of bird watchers is always worthwhile to keep. DOORS OPEN BY 7:00pm AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30pm. Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of the museum and walk around to the west door. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts.

The 2007–2008 speaker series will wrap up on April 27th with Chris Pague from The Nature Conservancy, addressing some of the world con-

servation challenges involving grasslands and the bird species that live in them.

Welcome New and Renewing Members!

Polly Reetz 470 Clayton Denver 80206 303-333-2164
 J. Adair Prall 5265 Skytrail Dr Littleton 80123 303.797.3633
 Lauren Burke 12205 N Perry St Lot 268 Broomfield 80020 303.465.1387
 Connie Kogler 4778 HayWagon Ct Loveland 80537 970.622.9710
 Welcome Back! Christy Honnen 4875 S Monaco St #401 Denver 80237 303.290.6187

Contributions to Rare Bird Alert/Educational Endowment Fund:

RBA Sally Plummer, John Drummond, Jeff Dawson, Pat & Ed Joy, Grace Hahn, Paul Barrett, Mary Zick, Mary Jane Black, Kathanne Lynch, Becky Campbell, Bill & JoAnn Hackos, Diane Hutton. EEF: Marian Kyle, Sally Plummer, Grace Hahn, Susan Carr

Thank you!

Ah, Chickens...

Watching Colorado's grouse strut their stuff on mating leks in the arctic pre-dawn hours on an April morning is an experience not easily forgotten. These chickens are colorful, agile on their feet, do pointy things with their head and tail feathers, and boom out their variously-colored air sacs to fight for the right to mate with much plainer females, who despite their simplicity, wield all the power to choose the father of their children.

Here are just some of the many opportunities to view grouse:

High Lonesome Birdtours, www.hilonesometours.com has a tour from April 9-18, 2009 that, for a substantial fee, leapfrogs all over Colorado and eventually provides views of most, if not all seven species of chickens. In addition, many other Colorado birds, some not so easy to find, are on the agenda for this adventure. 520-458-9446 or 1-800-743-2668.

Arena Dust Tours, www.arenadusttours.com, has a small Bed and Breakfast in Prowers County and dry-camping space for birders. For a very reasonable price, they offer breakfast, lodging, and private viewing of the Lesser Prairie Chickens which they are helping to protect. 719 523-6591.

Sisk-a-Dee, www.siskadee.org works collaboratively with the Colorado Division of Wildlife to promote the conservation of the Greater Sage Grouse. The Waunita Lek is open for general public viewing at a pull-out on the road from April 1-May 10. A viewing trailer can be rented for groups. 970 641-3959.

Contact the Wray Chamber of Commerce, www.wray.chamber.net about Greater Prairie Chicken and Sharp-tailed Grouse lek tours on Saturdays and Sundays between March 27 and April 26. 970 332-3484.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, www.ventbird.com, will be aiming for 5 species of grouse between April 25-May 4, 2009.

The Colorado Division of Wildlife, www.wildlife.state.co.us, has a colorful and very helpful brochure with more information. 303 297-1192. Below are some of the local Division of Wildlife contacts near lek areas:

Brush	970 842-6300	Meeker	970 878-6090
Grand Junction	970 255-6100	Steamboat Springs	970 870-2197
Glenwood Springs	970 947-2920	Hot Sulphur Springs	970 725-6200
Gunnison	970 641-7060	Montrose	970 252-6000
Lamar	719 587-6900		

Division Headquarters - Admin offices, 6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216 303 297-1192

These contacts may be able to help you find the grouse on your own, if you'd rather be alone when you doze off into hypothermia. There are other places to see chickens, some in Kansas, some in Nebraska and elsewhere.

Watch co-birds for ideas and just search the web.

Grouse on the Decline

From the journal of Meriwether Lewis, 1805 - *I have also met with great numbers of Grouse, or prairie hens as they are called...*

Grouse populations have declined steeply in the 200 years since the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Once numerous enough to provide food for Native Americans and settlers, grouse, like the wild landscapes they inhabit, are disappearing. Today scientists see grouse as barometers for the condition of native landscapes. Much of their native habitat has been converted for planting crops, grazing livestock, or for human development.

Summary of the status of Colorado grouse:

Greater sage-grouse - considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Grouse Map



Gunnison sage-grouse – once lived throughout southwestern Colorado and southeastern Utah, but now limited to seven remote sites. Considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Dusky grouse – by far the most abundant grouse in the state. Population is currently stable.

Plains sharp-tailed grouse – currently classified as a state endangered species, has all but disappeared from parts of its former range. In northeastern Colorado, re-introduction efforts are underway.

Columbian sharp-tailed grouse – classified as a species of special concern.

Greater prairie-chickens – once a Colorado endangered species; populations have rebounded due in large part to partnerships between the Division of Wildlife and private landowners.

Lesser prairie-chickens – considered a threatened species in Colorado.

White-tailed ptarmigan – populations are currently stable, but the alpine willow habitat they depend upon is degraded by the increasing volume of high country recreation and by overgrazing by large elk herds.

Articles and Research from Carol Blackard

Map and text reprinted with permission from the Colorado Division of Wildlife's brochure "Watching Grouse, Prairie Chickens & Ptarmigan"

So Sayeth the Speaker...

Avian Navigation was presented by Dr. Hugh McIsaac, Senior lecturer at the University of Denver Department of Biological Sciences, was the feature at the January 26 DFO meeting, Museum of Nature and Science

OK. Let me see if I understand. (sayeth Carol Blackard)

I'm a bird, a hatchling, and somewhere in my brain is a set of instructions about how far to fly out over the ocean, sail south on a tailwind, then how far west, then how far south again, and finally I'll come to the end of my vector instructions and set down for the winter. I don't have a clue what my wintering grounds look, smell or sound like, and my parents left me to fend for myself. So, I'll just set out when the time comes and follow my instructions. I hope I don't get blown off track, or taken off track by some conniving scientist, because I'll never be able to adjust. Just not smart enough yet. Map sense doesn't come until later.

But, wait, what does north mean? Where's that? Oh yeah, when my mouth isn't open, I'm supposed to be doing my homework, studying the night sky for the stars that rotate around a fixed point. Oh, I get it. There's North. That's a good start.

I guess I'll soon be sharpening my directional skills, mastering magnetism (angles between magnetic pull and gravity), infrasound (I'll be able to hear the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean from mid-continent), polarized light (I can see UV light as it ripples around the sun), and the westerly meaning of horizon glow at sunset. I'll build an internal clock that helps me know what the sun's position signifies according to time of day.

Eventually, after flying around for a while, I'll develop a magical sense of position, called my map, so I'll actually know if I'm off track or not, and be able to adjust course to get home. But I won't do it like humans do, inept as they are, traveling from one visible landmark to another. I'll have more advanced mechanisms; perhaps I'll follow odor landmarks or use my retina to see magnetic color changes. Mostly though, that part remains a mystery.

Thank you Dr. McIsaac for sharing with us DFOers. Funny how birds never cease to be amazing, no matter how much or how little we understand.

By Carol Blackard

What's in a Name?

William Swainson (1789-1855) has over 15 birds named after him, including one of our favorite buteos. Mr. Swainson was a British naturalist and bird illustrator who served as an army commissariat. He amassed a vast collection of zoological specimens, traveled extensively, and after retiring from the army, lived in the English countryside as a full time artist and author. In 1840, he moved to New Zealand to become the country's first Attorney General. Nuttall, Bonaparte and Audubon all recognized his contributions to ornithology and named birds after him (Bonaparte – the hawk, Nuttall – the thrush, and Audubon – the warbler. Mr. Swainson published many papers, contributing to bird journals and libraries extensively, world wide.

So now you're wondering who Bonaparte is and his relation to birding. Actually, Prince Charles Lucien Bonaparte was a nephew of the Emperor Napoleon and a renowned ornithologist, in this country and abroad. He also traveled extensively, much of the time in the US, cataloguing birds and has been called "the father of systematic ornithology". Unfortunately he died before completing his catalogue of every bird species in the world. His legacy of work was an extraordinary contribution to ornithology.

Next month we'll investigate Anna, Lucy and Virginia and why little yellow birds are named after them.

Good birding to all, Niña

Source: "Whose Bird" – Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins

Field Trip Summaries for January 2009

Jan 4, Sunday *Belmar Historic Park (BEL)* Trip cancelled due to weather.

Jan 10, Saturday *South Platte Park (SOU)*

Leader(s): Ed Holub. **Observers:** Nelson Ford, Derek Hankins, Lois Levinson. **Time:** 0800-1430. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 1.85 mile on foot. **Habitat:** River, ponds, river riparian, elevation 5300'. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, cold, 24-43°F, west wind 0-5mph. **Totals:** 36 species, 2216 individuals.

Jan 11, Sunday *Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, Prospect Park (WHE)*

Leader(s): Paul Slingsby and Jim Duggan. **Observers:** Tim Smart, Will Burt, Meredith Anderson, Dick Prickett, Jessica Jenner, Jean Davis, Nita Rough, Neil Montague, Toni Rautus, Rick and Connie Steinkamp, Jerry Davidson, Pauline Ide, Fran Campbell. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Habitat:** Riparian. **Weather:** Overcast, 31-41°F, west wind, 10mph. **Totals:** 43 species, 1682 individuals. **Highlights:** Very tame, cooperative immature Cooper's Hawk and Red-tailed Hawk; 10 of our 17 participants joined us for Mex food, we all needed a warm-up!

Jan 17, Saturday *Platte River and 88th (PLA)*

Leader(s): Buzz Schaumberg. **Observers:** Joe and Corrine Bartell, Diana Carter, Patty Echelmeyer, Jean Eddins, Gail Evans, Nelson and Rita Ford, RD Ginn, Derek Hankins, Ed Holub, Pauline Ide, Janet and David Johnston, Steve Kingswood, Nancy Osborn, Bob Shade, Lynn Willcockson, and 7 who didn't sign in. **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** River-side. **Weather:** Calm, clear skies, 35-55°F. **Totals:** 40 species, 834 individuals. **Highlights:** Yellow-rumped Warbler, Prairie Falcon, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet along with our target bird, Barrows Goldeneye. The size of the group of observers was good too. It's been a while since I have led a group of over 20 people. I am thankful for several very good birders who shared their knowledge with new and less frequent birders.

Jan 18, Sunday *Bear Creek Lake Park (BEA)*

Leader(s): Mike Henwood and Rob Raker. **Observers:** Will Burt, Pauline Ide, Ron and Jeannie Mitchell, Neil Montague, Sharon Solove, Rick and Connie Steinkamp. **Time:** 0800-1200. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Reservoir, short grass, prairie, riparian, elevation 5600'. **Weather:** Clear to partly cloudy, 30-55°F, wind up to 10mph. **Totals:** 23 species, 276 individuals. **Highlights:** Pair of obliging American Dippers in the early morning. Great close up looks at perched light phase adult Ferruginous Hawk. Rough-legged and Ferruginous soaring overhead at the same time.

Jan 24, Saturday *Castlewood Canyon and Franktown (CAS)*

Leader(s): Gail Evans. **Observers:** Corrine Bartell, Joe Bartell, Laine Gibb, Jessica Jenner, Nancy Osborn, Melissa Smith. **Time:** 0830-1330. **Distance:** 82 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Conifers, grassland, bird feeders, elevation 6000'. **Weather:** Clear, 17-60°F, southeast wind, 3mph. **Totals:** 28 species, 271 individuals. **Highlights:** Great viewing and a wide variety at Karen Metz's and Hugh and Urling Kingery's feeders.

Jan 25, Sunday *Cherry Creek Reservoir (CHE)*

Leader(s): Karen von Saltza. **Observers:** Pauline Ide, Will Bunt, Peter Spanberger, Chuck Walters, Patty Echelmeyer, Lois Levinson, Bill Wuerthele, Mary Keithler. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Open water, cottonwood riparian, plains. **Weather:** Foggy, overcast, some snow, cold, 25-30°F. **Totals:** 23 species, 874 individuals.

Jan 29, Thursday *Pueblo Area (PUE)*

Leader(s): Charles Thornton-Kolbe. **Observers:** Brandon Percival, Leon Bright, Sarah Bradley, Meredith Anderson, Bob Spencer, Mymm Ackley, Gail Evans, Corrine Bartell, Joe Bartell, Marjorie Joy, Mary Ellen Moore, Jeannie Mitchell. **Time:** 0600-1600. **Distance:** 260 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, grassland, scrub, elevation 4000'. **Weather:** 40-50°F, windy, 20mph. **Totals:** 63 species, 2567 individuals. **Highlights:** We started with finding over thirty White-winged Doves at a spot close to City Park. We met Brandon Percival at Pueblo City Park, and his help and leadership throughout the day assured a fantastic day with 64 or so bird species found. Meredith Anderson started the gull thick day by plucking the black mantle of a Lesser Black-backed Gull out of one of the huge gull flocks at Pueblo Reservoir. The day had nine gull species, including a few rarities such as Glaucous-winged Gull, Iceland Gull and Greater Black-backed Gull. Other really good birds included Barrow's Goldeneye, Surf Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser, and both Black Phoebe and Say's Phoebe. Many an annual bird was enjoyed by all. Over half of the group of 13 added life birds, including one person who added six and another who became 1 species closer (Lapland Longspur) to the big 500 ABA area goal.

Continued on page 9

What Birds to Look for in March—and Where to Look for Them

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In March, the average high in Denver is 52 degrees and the average low is 26 degrees, up 5 and 6 degrees on the high and low from February, though we all know it can be considerably warmer and colder. March is the snowiest month of year and I'm sure that all of us who were here in March 2003 remember the 3 day blizzard that dumped 6 feet of snow in Evergreen, more than 4 feet of snow here in Golden and 3 feet of snow in parts of Denver.

The marshes of Colorado start to come alive with the beginnings of the spring thaw. Ducks and Sandhill Cranes start congregating by the thousands at Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge in the lower San Luis valley in mid to late March. Plum Creek and South Platte River deltas at Chatfield State Park in Littleton as well as Cherry Creek State Park in Arapahoe County become more active as the thaw takes hold. These are also good places for early shorebirds. The southeast plains reservoirs like John Martin west of Lamar, Nee Noshe and Nee Granda north of Lamar, and Bonny State Park north of Burlington are also good places for gathering ducks, geese and early shorebirds. The west end of the water line at John Martin can be especially good for shorebirds though it can be hard to access. The marshes not only have gathering waterfowl, but Marsh Wrens, and Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds start setting up housekeeping. Western, Horned and Eared Grebes are also present with the Horned and Eared Grebes in both basic and alternate plumages.

In Boulder County; Sombrero Marsh (if it has water) south of Arapahoe at 55th, Walden Ponds and Sawhill Ponds are good places for returning Tree Swallows, Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal, Greater Scaup (can be a challenge) and in March 1997, there was a Tufted Duck at Cottonwood Marsh at Walden Pond. Walden and Sawhill Ponds are west of 75th north of Valmont and south of Boulder Creek. While you're in the area, walk Boulder Creek west from 75th for Eastern Bluebirds, waterfowl and possible Winter Wren.

In Weld County, Lower Latham Reservoir is a good

place for marsh birds and returning teal and other waterfowl. Shorebirds can be found on the south side of CR 48 at the south end of Lower Latham but a word of warning, some of the locals seem to consider CR 48 their own private speedway and will speed up, drive close and see how much dust they can kick up. They are also not above honking horns as they go by. So far, although this is a public road and there is no prohibition against parking on the road, the sheriff's department doesn't seem interested in doing anything about it.

Directly south of Lower Latham on CR 44 or 42 can also be good for shorebirds and waterfowl. On CR 57 north of CR 50 east of Lower Latham, is Loloff Reservoir which is also a magnet for shorebirds and waterfowl.



Good numbers of Snow Geese can be experienced at the plains reservoirs, but if you really want an experience, go to central Nebraska in late March to mid April for hundreds of thousands of Sandhill Cranes, Snow and White-fronted Geese and maybe a pair of Whooping Cranes if you are really lucky. In March 1999, a Common Crane was mixed in with the half million or so Sandhill Cranes that migrated

through central Nebraska that year. The area around Kearny and Gibbon is especially good for this spectacle.

Gulls, everyone's favorite challenge, are still around and feasting off the winter fish kill. To make it more interesting, there is a mix of basic and alternate plumages to be seen. Any of the lakes along the Front Range or eastern Colorado are a good place to practice your gull ID skills.

This is also the time of year will you will notice a change of sparrows as Chipping return to take the place of Tree: hawks as Swainson return to take the place of Rough-legged; and shrikes as Loggerhead replace Northern around the state.

March and April are prime time for chickens, Greater and Lesser Prairie Chickens to be exact, to be seen on the prairies of Colorado. This is also the time to see Greater Sage Grouse near Walden, Gunnison Sage Grouse near Gunnison, and Sharp-tailed Grouse near Craig, Colorado. See Carol Blackard's article on pages 4 and 5 that has lots of information about how to see these elusive and threatened/ endangered birds.

I'd like to thank Joey Kellner, Larry Semo, Nick Komar, Dave Leatherman and Loch Kilpatrick for their contributions to this month's column.

By Ira Sanders

January Additional Reports

Species	Date(s) seen	Comments	Location	County	Observers
Swan, trumpeter	1/3	(4ad, 1imm)	Standley Lake	Jefferson	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Steve Stachowiak, Glenn Walbek
Goose, Ross'	1/11	1	Berkeley Park	Denver	Chuck Lowrie, Bob Spencer
Scooter, surf	1/11	1 female/imm	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole
Duck, Long-tailed	1/1	(1m, 2f type)	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Duck, Long-tailed	1/11	(1ad male, 3f/imm)	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole
Goldeneye, Barrow's	1/1	1 male	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Goldeneye, Barrow's	1/11	1 male	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole
Sandpiper, spotted	1/1	1 odd winter record	Canon City	Fremont	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Dunlin	1/2	1 very odd winter record	Chatfield Reservoir	Douglas	Lisa Edwards, Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Steve Stachowiak, Glenn Walbek
Gull, Iceland	1/11	1-1st year - photos	Pueblo City Park	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole
Gull, lesser black-backed	1/1	(1ad, 1-1st year, 1-2nd year)	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Gull, lesser black-backed	1/11	(5ad, 1-2nd year)	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole
Gull, glaucous	1/1	(1st year bird)	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Gull, great black-backed	1/1	1 adult	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Gull, great black-backed	1/11	1 adult	Pueblo Reservoir	Pueblo	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole
Pigeon, band-tailed	1/3	1 odd for winter in Colorado	Allenspark	Boulder	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Steve Stachowiak, Glenn Walbek
Owl, Northern saw-whet	1/17-18	1	Franktown	Douglas	Hugh & Urfing Kingery: first one of the season
Owl, Northern saw-whet	1/22	1	Franktown	Douglas	Kathy Dressel - her first, at 4:45 a.m.
Sapsucker, yellow-bellied	1/1	1 female	Canon City	Fremont	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Sapsucker, yellow-bellied	1/1-11	1 imm male	Canon City	Fremont	Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Larry Modesitt, Connie & Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek
Sapsucker, yellow-bellied	1/11	1 adult male	Canon City	Fremont	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole
Bush tit	1/2	13	Littleton	Arapahoe	Doris Cruze
Bush tit	January	1-20	Aurora	Arapahoe	Cheryl Teuton, Dan Bropke
Bush tit	January	20	Littleton	Arapahoe	Barbara Hyde Boardman
Bush tit	January	1-20	Franktown	Douglas	Karen Metz, Hugh & Urfing Kingery
Bush tit	January	1-20	Greenwood Village	Arapahoe	Flo DeCesare
Red-breasted Nuthatch	all winter	1	Littleton	Arapahoe	Barbara Shissler
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Nov/Dec	1 daily	Denver	Denver	Joy Schieving
Wren, winter	1/2	1	South Platte Park	Arapahoe	Lisa Edwards, Joey Kellner, Loch Kilpatrick, Steve Stachowiak, Glenn Walbek
Western Bluebird	1/15	small flock	Castle Rock	Douglas	Buzz & Shirley Bowers
Western Bluebird	1/17	10	Parker	Douglas	Pat Brodbent
Sparrow, swamp	1/11	1 calling	Florance	Fremont	Joey Kellner, Brandon Percival, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Cole

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Jan 31, Saturday Ponderosa Pine Preserve (PON)

Leader(s): Mary Ann Bonnell. Observers: Steve Stevenson, Ella Jones, Buzz Schaumburg, Jennifer Tallmadge, RD Ginn, Jean Eddins, Christy Honnen, Yvonne and Peter Griffiths, Ron and Jeannie Mitchell, Kelly Shipa, Eric Kaiser, Jill Boyce, Mary Zik, Joe Roller. Time: 0830-1030. Distance: .5 mile on foot. Habitat: Elevation 6000'. Weather: Sunny and breezy, 40°F. Totals: 19 species, 229 individuals.

Tuesday Birders

Jan 6 South Platte River at 88th Ave (SOU)

July 1, 2008 Reynolds Park Jeffco Open Space (REY)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. Observers: 24 (two groups). Time: 0900-1200. Distance: 3 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, cottonwood, willow, agricultural, bicycle trail, elevation 5200'. Weather: Mostly sunny, 31-42°F, early calm, later gusts to 20mph. Totals: 42 species, 1842 individuals.

Jan 13 Prospect Park Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (PRO)

July 1, 2008 Reynolds Park Jeffco Open Space (REY)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. Observers: 28 (two groups). Time: 0900-1200. Distance: 2.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Lowland riparian, lakes, urban park, elevation 5386'. Weather: Mostly sunny, 39-49°F, variable wind, 0-8mph. Totals: 34 species, 1247 individuals.

Jan 20 Carson Nature Center at South Platte Park (CAR)

July 1, 2008 Reynolds Park Jeffco Open Space (REY)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Dave Hill, Mary Keithler. Observers: 38 (two groups). Time: 0900-1200. Distance: 3 miles on foot. Habitat: Gravel ponds, riparian, cottonwood, willow, cattails, bicycle trail, elevation 5600'. Weather: Sunny, mild, 42-68°F, almost no wind. Totals: 33 species, 709 individuals.

Jan 27 Cancelled due to bad weather.

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The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is now mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submittals, and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is preferred.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80128, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Feb, May, August, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Mar, Jun, September, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Our web site www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert, 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check the Bird Alert number for last minute trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750, www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 and 7:30 pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7:30 pm, and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats near Denver. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge (January 07) is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver. The *Lark Bunting*, the DFO monthly newsletter, is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members.

Denver Field Ornithologists

2009 Membership Application

Please indicate whether this is a ☐ **New Membership** or a ☐ **Renewal**

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

One Year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting)	\$20.00
One Year Family Membership (First Class Mail Lark Bunting is \$10 more)	\$30.00
Student/Youth Membership (age 21 or younger)	\$5
First class mailing of field trip reports—for those without internet access or who want the paper reports.	\$10 In addition to membership fee
Online reports are free from the web site dfobirders.org	
Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert	\$____
<i>With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site</i>	
Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund	\$____
<i>DFO awards grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats as well as preservation.</i>	
Name: _____	
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____	

Electronic Lark Bunting: E-Mail Address _____

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to Mary Burger, 10826 E. Maplewood Place, Englewood, CO 80111-5742

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE MARCH 2009

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE MARCH 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS									TUESDAY BIRDERS					TOTAL
	1 SOU	7 ALL	8 BON	14 BIG	15 WEL	21 BOU	22 CHA	28 -	29 BEA	3 PRO	10 -	17 BEA	24 WHE	31 DEN	
Stellar's Jay		18													18
Blue Jay			11	4		1				1			1		18
Western Scrub-Jay		1													1
Clark's Nutcracker		2													2
Black-billed Magpie	11	3	2	18	3	2	11		6	4		4	6	14	84
American Crow		12	4	7	15	2	7		5	5		1	1	9	68
Common Raven		11								1					12
Horned Lark		30	8		30										68
Tree Swallow									10						10
Violet-green Swallow									2						2
Black-capped Chickadee	8	18	9	10		14	18		2	11		3	2	7	98
Mountain Chickadee		6													6
Bufo		24								6					30
White-breasted Nuthatch		2	5			1	1			2				1	12
Pygmy Nuthatch		7													7
Brown Creeper							1								1
Eastern Bluebird			2						4						8
Western Bluebird									12						12
Mountain Bluebird			14		2				18						34
Townsend's Solitaire		1	7				1								9
American Robin	5	43	120	21	30	16	37		50	10		23	39	20	414
European Starling	4		60	45	1	18	26		30	5		19	124	9	341
American Pipit					5										5
Yellow-rumped Warbler				1											1
"Myrtle" race				(1)											(1)
Spotted Towhee							3			4			1		8
American Tree Sparrow			17	2	3										22
Fox Sparrow															0
Song Sparrow	3		8	14	2	15	19		2	5		3	7		78
Swamp Sparrow			1												1
White-crowned Sparrow	1		21	24	1		6			7			3	3	66
Dark-eyed Junco	2	22	90	6			3		16	8		1		6	154
"State-colored" race		(4)		(1)										2	(7)
"Oregon" race		(7)		(2)										1	(10)
"Pink-sided" race		(3)					1			2				1	(7)
"Gray-headed" race	2	(8)		3			2								(15)
Red-winged Blackbird	60	11	300	38	50	12	8		10	3		28	87	4	612
Western Meadowlark		1	29		40	2	7		6			1		1	87
Common Grackle									2						2
Great-tailed Grackle					2										2
Pine Grosbeak		9	1												10
Cassin's Finch		4													4
House Finch	4	13	24	8		4	4		2	32			1	12	104
Pine Siskin		62													62
American Goldfinch	1	3				2	7		3	2					18
House Sparrow	10		75		1		2					6			94
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	801	332	8878	902	6792	289	313	0	820	892	0	307	1088	165	20,801
TOTAL SPECIES	34	31	65	41	55	35	35	0	44	37	0	32	38	21	68
OBSERVATION LEGEND:															
a=adult, i=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only, c=calling, s=singing, boldface=rare/unusual, + =also/in addition to, x=individual data incomplete/not enumerated															

Platte Park (SOU)

Allenspark, Lyons (ALL)

Bonny Lake State Park (BON)

Big Dry Creek and Westminster Lakes (BIG)

Weld County (WEL)

Boulder's Walden and Sawhill Ponds (BOU)

Chatfield State Park

Bear Creek Lake Park

Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (PRO)

Bear Creek Lake Park (BEA)

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)

Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield (DEN)



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

April 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44 Number 4

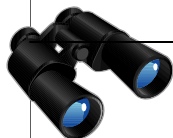


World Grasslands and Bird Conservation Challenges Presented by Chris Pague April 27 DFO Meeting

Chris Pague from the Nature Conservancy will discuss some of the challenges of grassland conservation and the birds that live in them. Chris will bring his experiences from around the world (including Mongolia, Mexico, Argentina, and the US) to explore this important topic. (Note: This meeting will begin with an election of the DFO Officers and new Board members. This should only take 5 to 10 minutes.) Chris is the Senior

Conservation Ecologist for The Nature Conservancy in Colorado and the former Director of the Colorado Natural Heritage Program at Colorado State University. Bird watching was his earliest "science" activity that secured conservation as a lifelong pursuit. His first biological survey expedition in Colorado was to the San Luis Valley. He later

Continued on page 3



April Field Trips

Saturday, April 4

Red Rocks

Leader: Bob Shade, 303-975-2476. Meet at 0800 at the Trading Post for ½ day trip, lunch optional. Possibly Violet Green Swallows will be joining White Throated Swifts, Canyon Wrens and solitaires in this scenic foothills habitat.

Sunday, April 5

Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Kathy Dunning 303-333-7253. . Meet leader at 0830 at Nature Center for ½ day trip, lunch optional. We'll walk about 3 miles on level trails looking for lingering winter species and early migrants. A new leader for us, ready to search for signs of spring with you! From Denver, take East I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Road, then turn south about 2 miles to Park Entrance. Parks Pass required.

Saturday, April 11

Aurora's Ponderosa Pine Preserve

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell, 303-739-2428. Must register for meeting time and place. Area offers mountain birding in a prairie setting. Leader is head naturalist for Aurora and you'll enjoy her enthusiasm and knowledge of the bird happenings there.

Sunday, April 12

EASTER – no trip scheduled

Saturday, April 18

The Arsenal

Leader: David Rhoades, 303-424-8633. Must register with leader for meeting time and place.

Continued on next page

April Field Trips, continued

½ day trip limited to 9 people, lunch optional. If needed, David can give directions to Arsenal. Surprising number of species there!

Sunday, April 19 **Cherry Creek State Park**

Leader: Mary Keithler, 303 771-1421. Meet at 0800 at the marina. ½ day trip – lunch optional. Go east from Yosemite Street on Union Ave. Entrance gate is across from Cherry Creek High School. Another new leader to help us welcome migrants, possibly shorebirds and passerines! Parks Pass required.

Saturday, April 25 **Bear Creek Lake Park**

Leader: Mike Foster, 303-456-2647. Call leader to register for day passes for this ½ day trip, lunch optional. Park is located just east of intersection of C470 and Morrison Road, off the south side of Morrison Road. Meet at 0700. Do not stop at toll booth. Go right at stop sign after toll booth, cross creek and turn right into parking lot. Mike will have up to date information on bird arrivals.

Sunday, April 26 **Dowdy Draw/Mesa Trail (Boulder area)**

Leader: Christian Nunes, 303-931-9131 – Boulder Open Space Wildlife Technician. Meet at 0800 for ½ day moderate hike with the Boulder Bird Club! Go west from Highway 93 on Highway 128, toward Eldorado Canyon to Dowdy Draw trailhead on the left. Varied habitat. Wear hiking boots and be ready for changeable weather. Great opportunity to meet our birding “neighbors!”

Other Bird Happenings:

Saturday, April 18 **Castlewood Canyon State Park**, south of Franktown, is again holding its “**Welcome Back Turkey Vultures!**” celebration. Call 303-688-5242 for information. Parks Pass is needed. Children especially welcome! Come see first hand a real live “TV!”

Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer and Compiled by Cris Cook

Spring Migration in Michigan

Spring migration in Michigan is one of the major North American birding experiences. To participate in this spectacular, a trip is planned for May 16 – 24. We will spend four days at the migration hotspots of Crane Creek in Ohio and Tawas Point in Michigan. This will be followed by two days in the Upper Peninsula looking for northern specialties such as Spruce Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Yellow Rail, Black-billed Cuckoo, Black-backed Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Connecticut Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, and LeConte’s Sparrow. Next we spend a morning at Mio on a trip operated by the Forest Service to see the rare and endangered Kirtland’s Warbler. We will spend a final morning in search of breeding Henslow’s Sparrow. With any luck, we could tally a total of 30 species of warblers in their breeding finery. Please contact me for the itinerary and other details. The trip is limited to eight participants. Good birding, Norm Erthal, 303-917-2596



Prairie Chicken Watching tours with Colorado Division of Wildlife

Weekends; March 27 – April 26

Unique opportunity to watch greater prairie chicken courtship dances as the sun comes up on the eastern plains. Guided tours include evening educational program presented by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and hosted by the Wray Museum. Early morning bus trip takes participants to specially designed viewing blind for optimal experience. Reservations are required. Cost varies from \$120 to \$135 per person; includes motel room. For information and to register see: <http://www.wraychamber.net/prairiechicken2.html> or call the Wray Chamber of Commerce at 970-332-3484.

Bird Conservation Challenges, continued from page 1

investigated the endemic species of the area, focusing on the Great Sand Dunes. Chris is an expert at making the natural world understandable and fun for all levels of birders and naturalists, and has spent his entire life exploring the outdoors and has encyclopedic knowledge of the natural world.

Major grasslands are one of the most disturbed and least protected major habitat types on earth. About 50% of the grasslands have been lost and less than 4% are protected. Grassland birds, especially the larger ones, have declined drastically and continue to do so in spite of increased conservation efforts. Grasslands worldwide contain playas and other wetlands of great importance to migratory shorebirds and waterfowl.

The Nature Conservancy has committed to global scale conservation of grasslands and is currently working in South America, Africa, Australia, and Asia in addition to North America. But first and foremost, Chris and the Colorado TNC is committed to conservation in Colorado, including Colorado's important grasslands habitat.

The Colorado Program of The Nature Conservancy is committed to global conservation and sends many staff to international efforts to learn and exchange information and expertise. In the past seven years, Chris has been working in Mongolia, Argentina, Mexico, Columbia, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Italy, and Switzerland. Chris will share some experiences and examples of these challenges from the United States, Mexico, Argentina, and Mongolia.

Very Special Night at DFO on Monday, March 23
featuring a presentation by Ted Floyd on "Chipping
Sparrows and Other Things That Go Bump in the Night".
Although the meeting will start at 7:30pm, come early
(around 7:05pm) as Ted will be signing his most recent
book, *The Smithsonian Field Guide to the Birds of North
America* (HarperCollins, 2008).

All persons are welcome to this free lecture and membership meeting. DFO meetings are interesting and the company of bird watchers is always worthwhile to keep. DOORS OPEN BY 7:00pm AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30pm. Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of the museum and walk around to the west door. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts. DFO meetings are scheduled

August to April (with the exception of December. The 2009–2010 speaker series will resume August 24, 2009.

Welcome New Members!

- Barbara & Douglas Jones, 65 S Cody Ct., Lakewood CO 80226
- Pam Tittes, 1631 Glencoe St., Denver CO 80220, 303.638.4246
- David Alcock, 4328 Thorndyke Pl., Broomfield CO 80020, 303.847.3014
- Joseph Lupfer & Karen Clark, 19084 West 61 Pl., Golden CO 8040, 303.854.8328
- Debra Mallory, 1386 S Laredo Ct., Aurora CO 80017, 303.369.5385

Welcome back Gregg Goodrich, Walt Hackney, Frances Sperl

Contributions to Endowment Fund: Barbara & Douglas Jones Thank you!

February Field Trip Summaries

Feb 1, Saturday *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Mary Burger. **Observers:** Patty Echelmeyer, Pauline Ide, Chris Owens, Melissa Smith. **Time:** 0800. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, prairie, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Clear, 30-45°F, north wind, 5mph. **Totals:** 30 species, 586 individuals.

Highlights: The lake was 95% frozen. The pond south of the shooting range had a mix of seven species of waterfowl – special were the pairs of Canvasback.

Feb 2, Sunday *Longmont Area (LON)*

Leader(s): Chris Owens. **Observers:** Joe Bartus, Corrine Batell, Patty Echelmeyer, Gail Evans, Jean Frazier, Edie Israel, Jim Petri, Dick Pratt, Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, Bob Shade, Paul Slingsby, Barb Thomas, Chuck Walters, Gail Yanowitch. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 20 miles by car. **Habitat:** Lakes, agricultural, riparian, elevation 5000'. **Weather:** Clear, 40°F, variable wind, 0-10mph. **Totals:** 38 species, 2003 individuals.

Feb 8, Saturday *Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)*

Leader(s): Patty Echelmeyer. **Observers:** Karen Clark, Jean Davis, Derek Hankins, Pauline Ide, Joe Lupfer, David Rhoades, Pam Tittes. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes and riparian areas, elevation 6000. **Weather:** Cloudy much of the time, some sun peeking through, 30-50°F, just a few gusts. **Totals:** 26 species, 494 individuals. **Highlights:** Close ups of Ruby-crowned Kinglet (red top knot seen by some). Weather cooperated though snow was predicted.

Feb 14, Saturday *Belmar Park (BEL)*

Leader(s): Karleen Schofield. **Observers:** Will Burt, Rick Creswell, Lola Lange. **Time:** 0845-1145. **Distance:** 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, man-made lake, grassland, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Cold, overcast, 30-32°F, north wind, 1mph. **Totals:** 22 species, 457 individuals.

Feb 15, Sunday *Roxborough State Park (ROX)*

Leader(s): Doris Cruze. **Observers:** Nancy Crews, Tom Crews, Betty Glass, Susan Hall, Gill Herrmann, Jennifer Herrmann, Jill Holden, Patricia Jackson, Greg Smith, David Weimer, Dennis Wojcicki. **Time:** 0815-1045. **Distance:** 2.3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Scrub oak, foothills meadows, elevation 6000'. **Weather:** Cool, clear and sunny, 31-42°F, south-southwest wind, 5-15mph. **Totals:** 22 species, 110 individuals.

Feb 21, Saturday *South Platte River Park: Littleton Historical Museum (SOU)*

Leader(s): Ed Holub. **Observers:** Will Burt, Nelson Ford, Keith Graves, Edie Israel, Alison Kondler, Deena Ruffe, Mary Zick. **Time:** 0730-1145. **Distance:** 6.5 miles by car, 1.7 miles on foot. **Habitat:** River, pond, elevation 5300'. **Weather:** Sunny, 16-46°F. **Totals:** 33 species, 743 individuals.

Feb 22, Sunday *Lake Jackson State Park, Prewitt Reservoirs, NE Prairies (LAK)*

Leader(s): Ira and Tammy Sanders. **Observers:** John and Pamela Breitsch, Patty Echelmeyer, Von Fransen, Dave Hill, Barbara Hoover, David and Janet Johnson, Deb Ostergard, Dick Prickett, Debbie Seldin, Tim Smart, Melissa Smith. **Time:** 0730-1630. **Distance:** 255 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes, farmland, prairie, elevation 4700'. **Weather:** Clear to partly cloudy, 28-55°F, south-southeast wind 0-24mph. **Totals:** 48 species, 10586 individuals. **Highlights:** The Lapland Longspur was a lifer for several observers, otherwise it was a boring trip.

Feb 28, Saturday *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Joey Kellner. **Observers:** Dan Brooke, Laura Derrington, Paul Differding, Jean Eddins, Gail Evans, Lee Farrell, Linda Farrell, Warren Finch, Nelson Ford, Jean Frazier, PD Ginn, Dave Hill, Jill Holden, Pauline Ide, Clint Jones, Nancy Osborn, Chris Owens, Jim Petri, Ken Ruiz, Cheryl Tenton, Kim Zocteway, Miriam Zocteway. **Time:** 0830-1200. **Distance:** 9 miles by car, 1.5 miles on foot. **Weather:** Clear, 22-47°F, south wind 0-4mph. **Totals:** 38 species, 367 individuals.

February Additional Reports

Species	Date	Number	Location	County	Observers & comments
Trumpeter Swan	2/7	4 adult, 1 juv	Lower Church Ranch Lake	Jefferson	Kathy Mihm Dunning and MOB
Trumpeter Swan	2/8	4 adults 1 gray first year	Lower Church Ranch Lake	Jefferson	Bob Spencer and MOB
Greater White-fronted Goose	2/23	Over one hundred	Red Lion SWA and Jumbo Res. SWA	Logan/Sedgwick	Kathy Mihm Dunning & Jeff Dunning
Greater Scaup	2/21	Four adult males	Canon City Valco Ponds	Fremont	Kathy Mihm Dunning, Norm Erthal, Allison Hilf, Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak
Rough-legged Hawk	2/14	14	I-70 corridor	Lincoln/Kit Carson	Hugh & Urling Kingery
Golden Eagle	2/17 +	2, nest building	Jefferson Reservoir	Douglas	Hugh & Urling Kingery
Thayer's Gull	2/23	One 1st winter	Jumbo Res SWA	Sedgwick	Kathy Mihm Dunning & Jeff Dunning
Iceland Gull	2/23	One 2nd winter	Jumbo Res SWA	Sedgwick	Kathy Mihm Dunning & Jeff Dunning
Lesser Black-backed Gull	2/23	Two adults	Jumbo Res SWA	Sedgwick	Kathy Mihm Dunning & Jeff Dunning
Great Black-backed Gull	2/23	One adult	Jumbo Res SWA	Sedgwick	Kathy Mihm Dunning & Jeff Dunning
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Feb	1	Franktown	Douglas	Hugh & Urling Kingery
Northern Saw-whet Owl	2/14	2 calling at the same time	Franktown	Douglas	Hugh & Urling Kingery
Winter Wren	2/22	1	Boyd Park, Log Lane Village	Morgan	Kathy Mihm Dunning
Winter Wren	2/15	1 calling and singing	Boyd Pond SWA	Morgan	Norm Erthal, Joey Kellner, Glenn Walbek
Western Bluebird	2/7	small flock	Franktown	Douglas	Karen Metz
Mountain Bluebird	2/7	1	Daniels Park	Douglas	Caroline Hancock
Mountain Bluebird	2/11	2	Elbert	Elbert	Jackie Dunn
Mountain Bluebird	2/26	1	Franktown	Douglas	Urling Kingery

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Tuesday Birders

Feb 3 *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Else van Erp. **Observers:** 42. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Large reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, grassy areas, shoreline, elevation 5600'. **Weather:** Mild, sunny, 40-59°F, west wind, 0-10mph. **Totals:** 32 species, 1381 individuals.

Feb 10 *Red Rocks and Morrison Parks (RED)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 4.4 miles by car, 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Foothills, shrubland, riparian, city park, elevation 5800-6360'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 37-41°F, variable wind, 5-30mph. **Totals:** 17 species, 116 individuals.

Feb 17 *Belmar Historic Park (BEL)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 37 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, grassland, wetland, man-made lake, elevation 5400'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 44-52°F, west wind, 5-20mph. **Totals:** 19 species, 460 individuals.

Feb 24 *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 35. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 7.8 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, riparian/cottonwood, wetlands, grasslands, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 48-66°F, calm, variable wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 27 species, 437 individuals.

So Sayeth the Speaker...

John R. Dembowski, PhD, curator of Vertebrate Zoology at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, likes Capybaras and Flightless Kakapos equally well. Charged with the maintenance and filing of 50,000 specimens, including 40,000 cotton-stuffed skins and skeletons, and other DNA-loaded specimens, he has been collecting, arranging and rearranging like a possessed bower bird in the back rooms of the museum.

Exotic specimens including a New Zealand Kiwi are housed at the museum as well as larger collections of endemic Colorado birds. At his presentation on Monday February 21, DFO members enjoyed close-up looks at Carolina Parakeets, a huge Elephant Bird Egg, both long extinct, as well as indigo-banded kingfishers, Peruvian tanagers, blue-crowned motmots, quetzals, Atlantic puffins, and Bohemian waxwings, and with far better looks than we get through binoculars.

The collecting aspect of the doctor's work has morphed over the years. Basic plumage of a collector used to be the suit, tie and hat of the 19th Century shotgun-wielding gentleman whose favorite hobby was stealing eggs from nests or shooting down pretty rarities. The alternate-plumage collector, however, looks just like you and me, a binocular-bearing birder or naturalist coming upon an unfortunate bird death in the field. Our collecting method, namely picking up and delivering dead birds to the museum, may be kinder and gentler, but it is less productive. That means our doctor must maintain the existing collection with even more ardor, as it is not likely to be replaced if it succumbs to pests, or the destructive forces of light, humidity, or museum renovation. It's not as easy as dousing everything in arsenic and mercury these days. Instead our zoologists use the "Hands off method": approach with care, wear gloves, turn out lights, control temperature and dust, so those vibrant indigo tanager feathers stay bright. And if worse comes to worst and a flagrant insect tries to set up house in one of our ivory-billed woodpeckers, a two-week stint in the refrigerator will reduce that bug to a harmless flake. Our still little friends must be protected from loss as well. Where do they fly off to, you ask? Why maybe the Girl Scouts took them, or maybe they went to East High and never came home. It's our man's job to find them again and hide them away in the jungle of the museum.

The good news is they are not really hidden from the public. Tours can be arranged by calling Jeff Stephenson at 303.370.8319. In fact, get a group together and do it! It might make higher-up purse handlers understand that this collection is valued by the public and worth protecting.

Even our President Barack Obama recently "visited" the collection, passing through the back room on his way to signing the Stimulus Bill. On your next tour through the back rooms, ask to see the mounted turkey on the wall that caused our President to stop and say, "Hey, that looks like Gibbs." See photo on the right.



Photo by Carol Blackard

By Carol Blackard

What's in a Name?

How did Lucy, Virginia and Grace rate to have warblers named after them? It seems at times that it's who you know, or who you are related to...

Lucy Hunter Baird (1848-1880) was the only child of Spencer Fullerton Baird, the famous American zoologist and renowned ornithologist. Her dad named the bird after her when she was 13 years old.

Mary Virginia Anderson lived from 1833-1912. Her husband, a US army surgeon discovered the warbler around 1858 and being the proper gentleman, named it after his wife.

Mr. Baird had a hand in the naming of what we know as the Grace's Warbler. Grace Darlington Page was the sister of Dr. Eliot Coues who collected the bird. Baird described the warbler and Dr. Coues asked Mr. Baird to name the bird after his 18 year old sister, Grace.

I think Niña's Finch has a nice ring to it.

Good birding to all, Niña

Source: "Whose Bird" – Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins

DFO 2008 Board Retrospective

At a recent DFO board meeting, members decided that our board actions need to be more transparent. To this end, we will begin publishing a short summary of board discussions and decisions in the *Lark Bunting* following each meeting. We hope this will help members appreciate our thinking and actions.

Board of Directors

First, we decided to increase the number of board meetings from two per year to four per year. Second, we voted to amend the by-laws to expand the size of the board from 11 (five officers and six board members each serving a three-year term) to as many as 14 as needed. Both decisions grew out of a perceived need to address issues in a more timely fashion, and to do that we needed more people, new blood, and more hands to accomplish our tasks.

A Curator of Ornithology

An action item was to advocate for a new position at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science: a Curator of Ornithology. A letter was sent to the museum and DFO members were encouraged to write letters of support. Additionally, we urged other organizations and individuals to support this concept. At our February 2009 meeting Dr. Demboski, Curator of Vertebrate Zoology, indicated that although funding doesn't allow for a new curator at this time, it is still possible for the future, and that the museum's Zoology Department strongly supports the idea.

Cherry Creek State Park

Board member Carol Blackard spear-headed an effort with Cherry Creek State Park to protect the 12-mile wetlands area, including the Beaver Ponds, and to divert the dog path which has allowed substantial disturbance to nesting and migratory birds, not to mention the birders that come to enjoy those birds. Watch for more information and public hearings soon.

Membership Fees

A difficult issue was modifying our membership fee structure. In 2008, income (90+% from membership dues) was \$10,144. Expenses for the year were \$11,361, the bulk of which went to the printing/mailing of the *Lark Bunting* and educational grants. Some of this imbalance was due to the switch from bulk mail to first class so the members opting to receive the paper version would get the newsletter more promptly. An additional factor was the increasing costs of printing and mailing. The difficult decision was made to raise membership costs to cover the discrepancy. The one-year family membership fee for those receiving the *Lark Bunting* by email was not increased and remains at \$20 per year. The student/youth membership was not increased and remains at \$5 per year. The membership for those receiving the *Lark Bunting* by mail was increased by \$5 to \$30 per year. A \$10 annual fee was added for those wanting to receive paper copies of field trip reports in the mail.

Fieldtrip Lists on the Website

Possibly our most debated decision of the year was to discontinue the inclusion of the monthly fieldtrip bird lists in the *Lark Bunting*. We opted instead to place the lists on the DFO website where they can be seen and/or downloaded for free, but to allow continued mailing of the lists for an additional fee. This change took place in February 2008. Trip leaders still submit their trip lists for the website, and additionally they are asked to submit a summary of highlights from each trip for the *Lark Bunting*. The board also makes sure that the DFO archives, housed with our DFO historian Warren Finch, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science Alfred M. Bailey Library have paper copies of the monthly fieldtrip bird lists. Members have asked why? We ceased printing the lists in the *Lark Bunting* because the process required the preparation of an additional database each month, at great cost of time and energy to make the trip lists compatible with the printer's software. Some options such as Cornell's e-Bird database have been discussed as a repository for our trip records, and will continue to be investigated in 2009.

Memorandum of Understanding with Audubon

DFO Vice-President Chuck Thornton-Kolbe negotiated a Memo of Understanding with Denver Audubon to work more closely together. ASGD will develop work project days and conservation work opportunities for both group's members and DFO will advertise these in the *Lark Bunting*. ASGD and DFO will share information on speaking and educational programs on conservation and wildlife-related topics. ASGD will provide its membership with information on DFO's programs and fieldtrips through its newsletter and list serve, and DFO will provide its membership with information on ASGD's programs through the *Lark Bunting* and the website. (*Please see the article on Audubon's legislative efforts on the next page.*)

Ongoing Tasks

1. Work to increase membership, especially toward the south
2. Guard the treasury
3. Support and enable the Ptarmigan Award and Educational Endowment Grants
4. Assist and support the fieldtrip schedulers
5. Assist and support the creation of the *Lark Bunting*
6. Recruit for committee and other positions and jobs
7. Continue to be alert to community habitat changes that might involve birds in the Denver area and consult with authorities as needed.
8. Continue to assist and support the speaker program

Submitted by Directors Chris Blakeslee and Carol Blackard.

What Birds to Look for in April—and Where to Look for Them

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you. In April, the average high in Denver is 62 degrees and the average low is 35 degrees, up 10 and 9 degrees on the high and low from March, although it has reached 90 and fallen to -2. April can have heavy snows as shown by the national record 24 hour snowfall of 76 inches that occurred on April 14, 1921 west of Ward. On the other end of the scale, Las Animas has experienced 100 degree temperatures in April.

Passerine migration begins with Yellow-rumped Warblers being one of the first to arrive. By the end of the month, all our regular warblers like Virginia's (which can be found on dry scrubby slopes), MacGillivray's (frequently found skulking low in riparian areas like Lair O'the Bear Park in Jefferson County), and Orange-crowned (almost anywhere) have arrived. The last week of April is a good time to look for some rarities including Northern Parula for which there are records from both the eastern and western slope, Cape May on the eastern plains, Black and White in wooded areas and almost all of the eastern warblers are possible. Remember to check out all the vireos you see for Cassin's and Blue-headed which are closely related to the more common Plumbeous Vireo. Their identification can be difficult but is worth the time. White-throated Swifts are returning to Red Rocks Park and other cliff areas along the front range and other parts of Colorado. While watching the swifts, also watch for migrating swallows of almost every North American species.

Good places to look for migrants are Hasty Campground at John Martin Reservoir in Bent County, Crow Valley Campground at Briggsdale in Weld County, Fountain Creek Regional Park south of Colorado Springs in El Paso County, and Pueblo City Park along with Valco Ponds SWA in Pueblo County. Around Denver; Cherry Creek State Park, Chatfield State Park, Belmar (south of the Lakewood library), Wheat Ridge Greenbelt and Bluff Lake (just east of old Stapleton on Havana) are all good places to bird. The Welchester Tree Park on 8th Ave between Indiana and Simms in Lakewood can sometimes turn up some good birds. In Larimer County, Dixon Reservoir seems to get more than its share of good birds.

Raptors are really moving in late March and April. This

is the peak season for migrating raptors to use the "hawk highway" along the hogback and foothills west of Denver. All 3 accipiter's (Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Goshawk), 4 falcons (American Kestrel, Merlin, Prairie Falcon and Peregrine Falcon) Turkey Vulture, both eagles and up to 6 species of buteo (Red-tailed Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk and even possible is the rare Red-shouldered Hawk) use this "highway".

Many other species also use this "highway" such as Sandhill Cranes, American White Pelicans, swifts, swallows, thrushes and waxwings. If you go to the Hawk watch (Directions - From

I-70 exit 259 (the Morrison exit), head south a short distance on CO 26 and turn left (east) into a Park-'n'-Ride parking lot (the "Stegosaurus" lot). Follow the steep and sometimes muddy trail through a gate and switchbacks up to the top of the ridge. At the top of the ridge turn left and go through the gate) you have a great chance of seeing many of these birds. Credit

for these directions goes to CFO and their fabulous County Birding site: (<http://www.coloradocountybirding.com/index.php>), from which I completely plagiarized these directions. Remember sunscreen, binoculars and a folding chair.

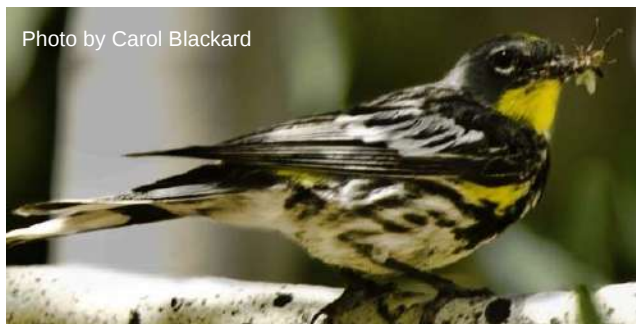
Shorebirds are really showing up in numbers now. The places I mentioned last month are still good in April to look for these ibirds. April and May are the time to look for a rare shorebird that still eludes me in Colorado. That is the Hudsonian Godwit. In 2008, there was one at Union Reservoir in Weld County on April 16. There are other records from southeast Colorado. Anywhere there is water and mud, is a good place to look for shorebirds.

Boreal Owls are calling more at this time of year. Cameron Pass in Larimer County on calm starry nights can prove fruitful though almost anywhere in Colorado spruce-fir forests it is possible to hear their rapidly rising "hoo" notes. They start singing shortly after sundown.

I'd like to thank Joey Kellner and Brandon Percival for their contributions to this month's column. If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greateauk@msn.com. All suggestions and contributions are gratefully accepted.

By Ira Sanders

Photo by Carol Blackard



Audubon's Legislative Effort

Although they only meet for about four months a year, the members of the Colorado legislature have a big influence on our state's lands, air, water and wildlife. Fortunately, conservationists are well represented at the Capitol by Jen Boulton, who works for both Audubon Colorado and Trout Unlimited (TU). She is the only full-time environmental lobbyist in the state house and her knowledge has to cover wildlife, energy, water law, land use and many other related issues. Jen comes by her expertise naturally: her mother, Jo Evans, lobbied for the Colorado Environmental Lobby and then Audubon for many years, and Jen was helping out when she was still in high school.

The hot issues this year are the new regulations for oil and gas drilling, which for the first time require protection of wildlife habitat, and the renewal of the Habitat Stamp, which raises money to help the Division of Wildlife buy or acquire easements on areas important for wildlife survival or for wildlife-based recreation. When important bills are up for a vote, Jen will send alerts to Audubon or TU asking that members contact their State Representatives or Senators. Usually this happens only once or twice a session, but the controversy over the oil and gas rules has elicited two alerts already this year on bills that would have severely weakened wildlife protections; the alerts went to only selected legislative districts, however, not to everyone. We expect at least one more alert on the regulations, as the representatives of the oil and gas industry are pulling out all the stops to weaken them.

We invite all DFO members interested in participating in the legislative process to join the Audubon Society's legislative alert list, so that you can receive timely information on bills crucial to protecting wildlife habitat. You can join by sending a message to info@denveraudubon.org and asking that your name and email be added to the list for legislative alerts. We do require email for this process because often the time frame is very short, a matter of a day or two.

Remember: decisions are made by those who show up (or write). And, as former Senator Ken Gordon has said, if you don't like what's going on, PARTICIPATE. For more information, call Polly Reetz at 303-333-2164.

2008 Birder of the Year

No stranger to us, Connie Kogler was recently crowned 2008 Birder of the Year by *Wild Bird Magazine*. No stranger to us because many if not most of us traipsed through Connie's garage to her breakfast nook, taking seats on kitchen chairs, and ogling the streak-backed oriole through carefully-washed floor-to-ceiling breakfast nook windows in the winter of 2007.

Constantly refilling the mealworms in the feeder at just the right time before "Pedro Maria" was expected, Connie was able to keep her unlikely visitor around for several weeks. We all worried about the sharp-shin who patrolled the yard, but were heartened to see how aggressive our visitor was - no push-over that bird. When the worms were out, the starlings couldn't get a place at the table. Now that's aggressive! Connie couldn't have been more generous to birders as they lined up to "ooh" and "ahh" over Colorado's first streak-backed oriole, opening her home day after day, from 7am through the 2:30pm feeding. Over 400 people tromped in and out and Connie just kept opening the door. It was a delightful experience watching that stunningly orange bird, just a few feet outside the window, eating Connie out of house and home.



Photo
by Bill
Eden

Grateful as they were, birders brought gifts when they came, brownies, suet, seed, worms. It was just one big party for over a month. Then one day, Pedro Maria got full enough, we guess, started eating less, and eventually just didn't show up for breakfast one day.

Connie has been rewarded with gifts and a trip to Costa Rica, but we hope our home-grown gratitude also plays well with her. No doubt, our Colorado birding community will never forget those snowy December days in Loveland sharing the wonder of that Mexican bird in our own back yard. Congratulations, Connie, for your well-deserved honor. And Thank You again.

By Carol Blackard—there is an article about Connie in *Wild Bird Magazine*, March/April 2009. It is available for purchase online at www.wildbirdmagazine.com, and at select birding shops or newsstands.

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and Alison Hilf.

The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is now mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submittals, and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is preferred.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80128, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Feb, May, August, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Mar, Jun, September, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Our web site www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert, 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check the Bird Alert number for last minute trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750, www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 and 7:30 pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7:30 pm, and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats near Denver. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge (January 07) is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver. The *Lark Bunting*, the DFO monthly newsletter, is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members.

Denver Field Ornithologists

2009 Membership Application

Please indicate whether this is a ☐ **New Membership** or a ☐ **Renewal**

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

One Year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting)	\$20.00
One Year Family Membership (First Class Mail Lark Bunting is \$10 more)	\$30.00
Student/Youth Membership (age 21 or younger)	\$5
First class mailing of field trip reports—for those without internet access or who want the paper reports.	\$10 in addition to membership fee
Online reports are free from the web site dfobirders.org	
Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert	\$_____
<i>With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site</i>	
Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund	\$_____
<i>DFO awards grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats as well as preservation.</i>	
Name: _____	
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____	

Electronic Lark Bunting: E-Mail Address _____

**Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Burger, 10826 E. Maplewood Place, Englewood, CO 80111-5742**

Dated Material

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E. Maplewood Place,
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



DFO Feature Programs

Monday March 23

Birding at Night: The Ultimate Frontier

Chipping Sparrows and Other Things That Go Bump in the Night ...

Famous birder Ted Floyd will share his passion (with almost no reasonable limits) for birding at night. Ted recently mentioned, "Unless you are an Arctic Tern, you spend exactly 50% of your life in the night time hours. So much time, so many birds...seriously, it is a waste of half your life not to go birding at night!"

Monday April 27

World Grasslands and Bird Conservation Challenges

Chris Pague from the Nature Conservancy will discuss some of the challenges of grassland conservation and the birds that live in them. Chris will bring his experiences from around the world (including Mongolia, Mexico, Argentina, and the USA) to explore this important topic.



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

May 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44 Number 5

World Grasslands and Bird Conservation Challenges Feature DFO Meeting: Monday April 27

Chris Pague is the Senior Conservation Ecologist for The Nature Conservancy in Colorado and the former Director of the Colorado Natural Heritage Program at Colorado State University.

Birdwatching was his earliest "science" activity that secured conservation as a lifelong pursuit. His first biological survey expedition in Colorado was to the San Luis Valley. He later investigated the endemic species of the area, focusing on the Great Sand Dunes. Chris is an expert at making the natural world understandable and fun for all types and levels of birders and naturalists. Chris Pague has spent his entire life exploring the outdoors and has encyclopedic knowledge of the natural world.

All persons are welcome to this free lecture and membership meeting on Monday, April 27. DFO meetings are interesting and the company of bird watchers is always worthwhile to keep. DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 PM AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30 P.M. Plan to come early for this special meeting. Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of the museum and walk around to the west door between 7:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Future Dates and Speakers: DFO meetings are scheduled August to April (with the exception of December) with our next meeting in August 2009. Mark your calendar now for the following fourth Mondays on each of these months. The 2009-2010 speaker series will resume August 24, 2009

May Field Trips

Saturday, May 2

Parker Regional Park

Leader: Steve Kennedy, 303-690-8265. Meet leader at 0730 at Parker Regional Park. From Main Street intersection in Parker, take Highway 83 south for 1.2 miles. Turn right on Indian Pipe Lane to the parking lot on the right. The Park is on the west side of the road. There is a day care center at the south end of the parking area. This will be a half day trip. Wear walking shoes and bring water and sunscreen. This trip is one long stroll along Cherry Creek and its environs. There are always interesting birds to be seen in May!

Sunday, May 3

Birding by Ear at Roxborough State Park

Leader: Alison Kondler, volunteer naturalist & ASGD Master Birder, 303-904-9140. Meet leader at 0830 at the Roxborough State Park Visitor Center for this incredible opportunity to learn bird sounds using fun and creative memory techniques. An indoor presentation will be followed by an easy walk outside to listen to the birds. Walk will finish about 11:30. Bring binoculars, water and snacks. **Space is limited.** Please call the visitor center, 303-973-3959, for reservations. Take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield S.P. to Waterton Rd on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles) State Parks or day pass required.

28th Annual Spring Count

Saturday, May 9

Barr Lake periphery: **Leader:** Jackie King, 303-287-1644. Meet at 0730 on access road to entrance station at Barr Lake State Park. This trip does not involve much walking -- good for people with limited mobility or stamina.

Chatfield State Park: **Leader:** Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748. Meet at 0600 at West (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks Pass required.

Waterton, downstream. 4-5 mile hike. Wear long pants (not shorts) due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed. **Leader:** Hugh Kingery, 303-814-2723. Meet at 0600 at Audubon Center/

Continued on next page

May Field Trips, continued

Discovery Pavilion (left turn immediately after turning from Wadsworth (Colo. 121) onto Waterton/Roxborough road (4.4 miles south of C470) and before the DOW parking lot for Waterton Canyon)

Barr Lake State Park: Leader: Charlie Chase (720-690-4341) charlie.chase@ef-den.org. Call leader if you plan to go. Meet at 0600 at Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. Exit I-76 at Bromley Lane; go east about ¼ mile and turn right (south) on Lark Bunting Lane, to end of road. This is a ten-mile, all-day hike around the lake. State Parks pass required.

Sunday, May 10

Lower Bear Creek: Leader: Mike Henwood (720-570-5070) hawken@aol.com. *New meeting place:* Meet at 0600 at parking lot on Morrison Road at C470, northwest corner, next to the Conoco station.

Castlewood Canyon State Park: Leader: Randy Lentz, 303-680-3381. Meet at 0630 at old entrance. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance. State Parks pass required.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal; Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723. Must register with leader in advance.

Monday, May 11

Cherry Creek Reservoir: Leader: Allison Hilf, 303-888-5110. Meet at 0630 at the Marina on west side (near Cherry Creek High School) in Cherry Creek State Park. State Parks pass required.

Friday, May 15 to Sunday, May 17

Bonnie State Park

Leader: Bob Righter, 303-692-8529. Meet leader at the Foster's Campground at 1700, Friday night. Friday night the group will bird around the Foster's campground area. You can camp there or stay in a motel in Idelia or Burlington. You will need to bring all your meals. Trip will end at noon on Sunday. State Parks Pass required.

Saturday, May 16

Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. Meet leader at the Nature Center at Barr Lake at 0800. Trip will be an easy hike on mostly paved paths or well worn dirt paths as leader uses a wheelchair for mobility. Bring lunch and drinking water. Trip will end shortly after lunch. State Parks Pass required. This would be a good trip for novice birders and new members. From Denver, take East I-76 to Bromley Lane, Exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Road, then turn south for approx. 2 miles to park entrance.

Sunday, May 17

Two Ponds and Rocky Flats

Leader: Dave Rhoades, 303-424-8633. Meet leader at 0800 in the Two Ponds parking lot and bird there until time to load the van for the trip to Rocky Flats. This will be a three quarter day trip ending about 1 p.m. so lunch is optional, but you might want to bring water and snacks. There is a limited number of participants who can go, so call leader to make reservations and get directions.

Saturday, May 23 to Monday, May 25

Nebraska's Crescent Lake Refuge

Leader: Chris Owens, 303-772-6048. Meet leader at 0800 Saturday morning at Jim Hamm Park Nature Center – From I-25 take exit 240. Go west 4 miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld Co. Line Road, then 2 miles north to park on left at E. 17th Ave. Will drive to Nebraska and enjoy lots of great birding. You will need to bring three lunches and two breakfasts and plan to eat two dinners at restaurants. Call leader for hotel suggestions and carpooling arrangements. Trip will return to Jim Hamm by 1800, maybe earlier. This is a fabulous trip for shorebirds.

Saturday, May 23

Audubon Center

Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072. Meet leader at 0800 at the Audubon Center. Take C470 to Wadsworth. Take Wadsworth south for 4.4 miles and turn on Waterton Road. It will be the first left. This will be a half day trip so bring water and snacks, lunch is optional. It is an easy, wheelchair accessible trail. Trip will end by noon.

Sunday, May 24

Rigli Ranch

Leader: Joe Rigli, 970-768-7121. Meet leader at ranch by 0830. From Hudson, go east on CO 52 until it turns north. Don't turn north, but continue east on Morgan County road F to CR 14, then turn north for approximately one mile to first house on left by boxcars. Bring lunch and extra water.

Monday May 25 (Memorial Day)

88th and South Platte Trail

Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. Meet leader at 7:30 at the parking area at E. 88th and the South Platte River – From I-76 take E. 88th Ave. exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead. Explore along the river on the bike path which is paved and level. Bring lunch and drinking water.

May Field Trips, continued

Saturday, May 30

Foothills Ovenbird Trip in Jefferson County

Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551 or 720-840-5070 (cell). Meet leader at 0700 at the Willow Springs Open Space which is a private area. This will be a five to six mile trip, with lots of up and down terrain so you will need to be in good physical condition. This trip is strictly limited to six people so you must call the leader to register and obtain details. Participants will enjoy the six mile hike through a variety of habitats while listening to singing birds at the top of their musical form. Will definitely see ovenbirds. This is a three-quarter day trip so bring water, snacks, lunch and sunscreen. Trip will end by 1400.

Sunday, May 31

Foothills Ovenbird Trip in Jefferson County

Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551 or 720-840-5070 (cell). Mike will repeat the Saturday trip. For details see above.

Sunday, May 31

Wheat Ridge Green Belt

Leader: Patty Echelmeyer, 303-233-4947. Meet at 0800 at the north side of Prospect Park Lake south of West 44th Ave. just east of Robb St. This is an excellent area to see warblers as well as shore and water birds. This will be a half day trip so lunch is optional. This trip will involve easy walking only. This is a good trip for novice birders and new members.

March Field Trip Summaries

Mar 1, Sunday

South Platte Park (SOU)

Leader(s): Nina Routh. **Observers:** Deb Armer, Jim Duggan, Christy Honnen, Barb Jones, Doug Jones, Ann Tanow, Toni Rautus, Peggy Wait. **Time:** 0830-1200. **Distance:** 2.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, woods, lake. **Weather:** Overcast early to sunny, 32-55°F. **Totals:** 34 species, 601 individuals.

Mar 7, Saturday

Allenspark, Lyons (ALL)

Leader(s): Mike Serruto. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Jim Duggan, Gail Evans, Patty Echelmeyer, Christy Honnen, Toni Rautus, Tim Smart, Corrinne Bartell. **Time:** 0830-1700. **Habitat:** Foothills, riparian, grasslands. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 36°F. **Totals:** 31 species, 332 individuals. **Highlights:** Beautifully colored pine grosbeaks in Allenspark; no rosy finches (alas); prairie falcon running off golden eagle from nesting area outside Lyons; two pairs of mating red-tails; two nice flocks of bushtits; cozy lunch in Allenspark Diner watching snow fall. Thanks to Lakewood Wild Birds Unlimited for donation of five pounds of seed to the Fawnbrook Inn.

Mar 8, Sunday

Bonny Lake State Park (BON)

Leader(s): Mark Peterson. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Tina Jones, Jeannie Mitchell, Ronald Mitchell, Tim Smart, Margaret Smith, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp. **Time:** 0800-1530. **Distance:** 98.6 miles by car, 1.2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Plains, low elevation riparian, grasslands and semi-desert, elevation 3700'. **Weather:** Clear to partly cloudy, 22-67°F, north-northwest wind, 0-25mph. **Totals:** 65 species, 8678 individuals. **Highlights:** Pine grosbeak, sandhill cranes, northern cardinals and long-eared owls.

Mar 14, Saturday

Big Dry Creek and Westminster Lakes (BIG)

Leader(s): Meredith Anderson. **Observers:** 21. **Time:** 0815-1345. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Stream-side, riparian, lakes. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 28-60°F, calm, slight breeze, 1-7mph. **Totals:** 41 species, 902 individuals. **Highlights:** Love was quite literally in the air over Big Fry Creek as pairs of Red-tailed and Sharp-shinned hawks each took to the skies for some captivating aerial courtship displays. The group enjoyed seeing a lone male Great-horned owl, though it regarded us with indifference; we did not find a nest. And thanks to Peggy Gonder for spotting the only warbler of the morning – a Myrtle's yellow-rumped!

Mar 15, Sunday

Weld County (WEL)

Leader(s): Ira and Tammy Sanders. **Observers:** Jeannie Howell, Tina Jones, Allison Kondler, Dick Prickett, Tim Smart, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp. **Time:** 0730-1530. **Distance:** 205 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Prairie, reservoirs, ponds, dry riparian, elevation 3980-5280'. **Weather:** Clear to cloudy, 23-64°F, south to south-southeast wind, 8-12mph. **Totals:** 55 species, 6792 individuals. **Highlights:** A weird hybrid duck on ponds in Longmont; it looked like a Gadwall x White-cheeked Pintail or Rudy Duck. And a large pile of owl pellets at the work center north of Crow Valley Campground.

Books to Sharpen Your Bird-finding Skills

Many DFO members will remember David Leatherman's amazing lecture in March 2008, on learning to find more birds by knowing more about where birds feed and what they eat. We really ought to try and talk him into writing a book on the subject. Thankfully, David followed up his presentation with an article in the September 2008 Lark Bunting titled "*Should Your Next Bird Book be a Tree Book?*" Taking David's words and message to heart, and thinking of birding from a broad ecological point of view, I would like to recommend five books which might make excellent additions to your birding library.

David hasn't written the bird feeding book yet, but among his many publications he did coauthor *Insects and Diseases of Woody Plants of the Central Rockies*. *Insects and Diseases* was edited by Cranshaw, Leatherman, et. al., and was published by the CSU Cooperative Extension (Bulletin 506A) and the Colorado State Forest Service, Ft. Collins in 1993. This book is indispensable for home gardeners and naturalists alike! While the book doesn't address birds directly, it does focus in great detail on plant damage including that caused by birds and plant diseases. It is full of detailed information on insects and their plant hosts, and thus we make the connection, a la David Leatherman, to finding birds through greater knowledge of what and where they eat. One interesting non-food example from the book involves the descriptions of rusts (fungi) and dwarf mistletoes in Colorado conifers which cause growths called "witches brooms." The disease causes abnormal growth in tree branches which produces large, dense clumps of needles which provide a favorite nest platform for our reclusive Northern Goshawks. Who doesn't get excited by a good goshawk sighting?

Two excellent tree books which are highly recommended are *North American Trees* and *Trees and Shrubs of Colorado*. *North American Trees* (5th edition) is by Richard J. Preston and Richard R. Braham, and was published by the Iowa State Press, Ames, Iowa, in 2002. This wonderful book, first published in 1948, offers detailed descriptions and information about native and naturalized trees, dichotomous keys, beautiful line illustrations, and distribution maps. Even just a quick glance through this text is likely to enlighten you on new and interesting facts about the trees in our environment. Also of special interest is the revised and expanded edition of *Trees and Shrubs of Colorado* by Jack L. Carter, Mimbres Publishing, Silver City, New Mexico, 2006. Carter, professor emeritus of Colorado College, has greatly expanded his book over the years including improved keys, plant descriptions, maps, and illustrations. So again, it is a great book to have on the back seat of the car on any fieldtrip.

The most interesting book I have run into over the last couple of years is *Bird Tracks & Sign: A Guide to North American Species*

by Mark Elbroch with Eleanor Marks. This book was published by Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, in 2001. Like David Leatherman, Elbroch offers an expanded view of how to find birds by following the tracks and signs they leave as they move through the environment. He has chapters on tracks and trails, pellets, droppings, skulls, signs of feeding, nests and roosts, skulls, and feathers. Elbroch begins with a discussion of track analysis and bird foot morphology, and includes numerous beautiful drawings and photos of the tracks of over 110 avian species. He points out that "most North American species are capable of producing" pellets and he includes photos of pellets from almost 30 species of birds. He discusses feathers and has photos of feather collections of almost 150 species - invaluable. A favorite little tidbit comes from his discussion of food storage and caches in which he talks about the seeds of our native Mt. Mahogany bushes (*Cercocarpus* sps.) which can blow off or simply drop to the ground and thus form natural seed caches beneath this bush's branches which then attract seed eaters such as towhees, Dusky Grouse, and



Front Range winter Mt. Mahogany seeds (6,000 - 8,500 feet)

Cassin's Finches. Mark Elbroch also has an excellent book titled *Mammal Tracks & Sign* (2003) and another titled *Animal Skulls* (2006) which are worth your consideration.

Finally, a good old standby is *American Wildlife & Plants: A Guide to Wildlife Food Habits* by the illustrious Alexander Martin, Herbert Zim, and Arnold Nelson. *American Wildlife* was published in the 1950s and came out as a Dover Edition, New York, New York, in 1961. It may be out of print now, though I'm not certain of this. While this book may seem old in human terms,

Books to Sharpen Your Bird-finding Skills, continued

the hundreds of plant and animal species, and the ecological relationships discussed have existed for millennia. It is worth a good look.

Where might an inquisitive birder find these books?

- The Tattered Cover (303-322-7727) can order new books or help search for out-of-print books.
- Barnes and Noble, and Borders - same as above
- Powells Books in Portland and Seattle (866-201-7601 or www.powells.com) sells new books and many used (recycled) books.
- American Birding Association (800-634-7736 or www.abasales.com) sells new books.
- Amazon (www.amazon.com) sells new and recycled books.
- Alibris (www.alibris.com) offers a huge number of recycled books from a huge number of book dealers.
- Abebooks (www.abebooks.com) offers a huge number of recycled books from a huge number of book dealers.

If you have a favorite quality book dealer or book website which specializes in birds and/or natural history please share the information with me (303-694-4670) and I will write a small article for the Lark Bunting to share these book finding sources with the DFO community. **By Chris A. Blakeslee**

Mar 21, Saturday *Boulder's Walden and Sawhill Ponds (BOU)*

Leader(s): Paula Hansley. **Observers:** Jeanne Howell, Peggy Gonder, Betsy Shaw, Deb Mallory, Mary Zick, Linda Knudsen, RD Ginn, Jean Eddins, R Spencer, Walt Knudsen, Barbara Montgomery, Alistair Montgomery, John Myers, Jujlie Thorpe.

Time: 0830-

March Field Trip Summaries, continued

1300. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, marsh, pond, field, wetlands, elevation 5300'. **Weather:** Clear, calm, dry, 40-70°F. **Totals:** 35 species, 293 individuals.

Mar 22, Sunday *Chatfield State Park*

Leader(s): Paul Slingsby. **Observers:** Alison Kondler, Nina Routh, Jessica Jenner, Pauline Ide, Dick Prickett, Lyn Graves, Toni Rautus, Neil Montague, Jim Duggan, Margie Mills, Kay Miller, Polleke Siraa, Allen Hagood, Arnold Silverman, Patricia Echelmeyer, Jacques Chartier, Betsy Shaw. **Time:** 0800-1430. **Distance:** 1 mile by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, Platte River, Plum Creek. **Weather:** Sunny, 70°F, north wind, 5-10mph. **Totals:** 35 species, 313 individuals.

Mar 28, Saturday *Sedalia Area* Cancelled due to weather.

Mar 29, Sunday *Bear Creek Lake Park*

Leader(s): Mike Henwood. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Jacques Chartier, Karen Clark, Jim Duggan, Mary Geder, Dave Hill, Edie Israel, Jessica Jenner, Mary Keithler, Lois Levinson, Joe Lupfer, Jeannie Mitchell, Pam Norris, Dick Prickett, Toni Rautus, Mary Ann Rose, Nina Routh, Paul Slingsby. **Time:** 0800-1200. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, riparian, short grass prairie, elevation 5600-5700'. **Weather:** Sunny and clear, southeast wind, 4-7mph. **Totals:** 44 species, 620 individuals.

Tuesday Birders

Mar 3 *Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (PRO)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 47 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes, riparian, cottonwood, ponds, willow, cattails, urban park, elevation 5386'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 64-74°F, west wind, gusty 0-20mph. **Totals:** 37 species, 692 individuals.

Mar 10 *Bear Creek Lake Park (BEA)* Trip cancelled due to snow weather.

Mar 17 *Bear Creek Lake Park (BEA)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 44. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, ¾ mile on foot. **Habitat:** Reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, willow, cattails, open fields, elevation 5800'. **Weather:** Cloudy to sunny, 46-70°F, south wind, 0-3mph. **Totals:** 32 species, 307 individuals.

Mar 24 *Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Alice Kruse and Kathy Bollhoefer. **Observers:** 30 (three groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 4 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, ponds, cottonwood, willow, urban park, elevation 5420-5386'. **Weather:** Mostly cloudy, 43-49°F, west wind, 5-20mph. **Totals:** 39 species, 1086 individuals.

So Sayeth the Speaker...March 23 DFO Meeting

Would you know a *Lifebird* if you heard it? That's what Ted Floyd wants you to think about.

To be more exact, he wants you to think about the epistemological dark side enigma of the Heisenbergian moment of the *Lifebird*. Fortunately, he doesn't leave one in the dark about what the heck that is.

It's apparently the high-pitched night call of Chipping Sparrows flying overhead at 1:00am in Lafayette at the wrong time of the year. It's the discovery of bush-hopping reclusive chipping sparrows in July in Colorado, where they neither breed nor winter. It's the study of museum specimens of chipping sparrows birds found dead in the area showing a variety of molts. It's the enthusiasm to put it all together into a scientific fact, that chipping sparrows are a molt-migrant, flying over our area, hiding out for up to six weeks while their feathers fall out and flying is difficult, seeking food and shelter. This is the birth of knowledge, and for Ted, is the celebration of a moment in space and time that constitutes the true meaning of *Lifebird*.

There are several species of molt-migrating birds that appear in Colorado in the summer, birds fleeing their drying-out Rockies breeding grounds in search of a better food supply. Molt migrants flee Colorado by mid-summer and head for Arizona where the monsoon rains in August bring in plants and insects, all the better to support the calorie-consuming process of molting. Some of them drop off here in the mesic microhabitat. So, we should watch for grounded Warbling Vireos, Western Tanagers, Lazuli Buntings, Bullock's Orioles, as well as Chipping Sparrows. Or, since they are so secretive, maybe listening for them would be more productive.

But, it's not just about the facts, ma'am. Ted wants us to get out there in the field and listen up. Be open to discovering something new and wonderful. Create knowledge in your own backyard. Never mind that one has a fussy baby to tend to - just "sweater him up" and get out and discover something in the middle of the night. Never mind that the four-year-old wants to slow you down in your field work. Maybe she'll find something you missed because she's closer to the ground where molting birds tend to be.

Listen for a *Lifebird*.

By Carol Blackard

What's in a Name?

Speaking of warblers....The Blackburnian Warbler is named for Mrs Anna Blackburn, a botanist, ornithology patron and museum owner in Lancashire, England. Her brother Ashton actually collected the specie. A single woman, she lived 1740 - 1793 and preferred to be called Mrs. Blackburn as it gave her more standing and authority.

Thanks to Audubon himself a wonderful little yellow & gray warbler we all know was named for a Scottish professor and artist named William MacGillivray. This gentleman (1796 - 1851) grew up on the Isle of Lewis and had extensive knowledge of flora and fauna. He was self taught by walking on field trips covering hundreds of miles. He was known as "the First Ecologist" and authored The History of British Birds. Mr. Audubon honored Mr. MacGillivray by naming the warbler after him.

Good spring birding to all, Niña

Source: "Whose Bird" - Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins"



Correction - We apologize for failing to correctly crediting the turkey photo in the April edition of the *Lark Bunting*. The very helpful photographer was Joe Lupfer who actually went to the effort to take the photo and send it to me at my request. Sorry, Joe, and thanks so much. Carol Blackard and the editor regret this oversight.



THANK YOU to three DFO members who have served as Board members: MEREDITH ANDERSON is ending a three-year term and will continue as a field trip scheduler. PEGGY GONDER is ending four years on the Board where her public relations knowledge was so valuable in producing our DFO brochure. And TINA JONES will end "countless" years on the Board and has decided to continue helping with applicants for the educational endowment fund.

Mary Cay Burger

DFO February Meeting: "How the Sausage is Made"

- Membership Report – 327 paid members (137 receiving *Lark Bunting* by US mail, 190 receiving it electronically; approximately 50% members are retired.)
- Treasurer's Report – DFO is in the black. Printing costs are high and we are looking for alternatives. Expenses in 2008 were for the *Lark Bunting*, Education Endowment grants, Breeding Bird Atlas II Grant, membership at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, liability insurance, taxes and fees, speaking honoraria, printing new DFO brochure, Rare Bird Alert phone line, and some miscellaneous expenses.
- Educational Endowment Grants discussed
- Approved one year's membership to DFO and Ted Floyd's *Smithsonian Field Guide* for Hawk Quest's silent auction.
- Slate of Officer and Board nominees for April 2009 discussed
 - President – Charles Thornton-Kolbe
 - Vice-president and Program Coordinator – Lynn Wilcockson
 - Treasurer – Bob Shade
 - Secretary – Sue Schulman
 - Membership Chair – Mary Cay Burger
 - Board Members - Two new members - Connie and Rick Steinkamp
- A big **Thank You** to retiring board members Meredith Anderson, Peggy Gonder, and Tina Jones!!
- Partnership between DFO and Audubon – *Warbler* now advertising our trips. We should work on doing things for Audubon
- Cherry Creek State Park is seeking DFO input on an upcoming engineering and construction project at Cottonwood Pond – watch for more in the *Lark Bunting*
- Endorsement of "Lights Out" - see article on page 9.
- Possible use of e-birds for archiving our wonderful bird reportings – in the past we have seen the e-birds entry format as too time-consuming and detailed for our volunteers, but we're planning to check on it further for the next board meeting
- Board will publish summary of its actions after each meeting.
- The practice of giving honoraria to our speakers was reviewed and formalized.
- DFO needs to recruit additional fieldtrip leaders. Tuesday Birders will be asked to put their contact information in the *Lark Bunting*. The possibility of adding more week-day trips was brought up – it was thought these might be popular amongst retirees

Next Board Meeting is June 25, 2009 and is open to the membership

Welcome New Members!

Jim Hansmann, 1060 S Parker Rd Apt 38, Denver 80231, 303.329.8261, **Barbara Nabors & Michael Wilson**, 5925 S Meadow Dr, Morrison 80465, 303.697.9445, **Walter Watson**, 2575 Dexter St, Denver 80207, 720.635.0553

Welcome Back!

Kathy Bollhoefer, 1150 Cook St, Denver 303.355.7569, **Frances Campbell**, 920 S Gilpin, Denver 80209, 303.733.7907, **Keith & Cheryl Chamberlain**, 4145 King St, Denver 80211-1611, 303.477.2491, **Fran Enright**, 83 Longview, Evergreen 80439, 303.674.2657, **Robert Fleming**, 2039 Crestvue Circ, Golden 80401-1769, 303.279.8122, **JoAnn Garavaglia & Ann Sprague**, 9900 W 56th Pl, Arvada, 303.420.7911, **Mike Henwood**, 15946 DoubleEagle Dr, Morrison 80465-9624, 303.716.8551, **Barbara & Don Hollums**, 6477 Wauconda Dr, Larkspur, 80118, 303.681.3144, **Norma Kamby**, 4100 Jay St, Wheat Ridge 80033, 303.421.5961, **Mary Katz**, 3201 Yates St, Denver, 303.455.2814, **Richard Masteller**, 400 Rangeview Dr, Littleton, CO 80120, 303.794.5950, **Meredith McBurney**, 1459 Clayton, Denver, 303.329.8091, **Scott & Sandy Menough/Wild Birds Unlimited**, 2720 S Wadsworth Blvd, Denver, 303.987.1065, **Colleen Nunn**, 6342 E Mississippi Ave, Denver 80224-1454, 303.520.7496, **Richard O'Leary**, 11200 W 25th Pl, Lakewood 80215, 303.237.4720, **Tom Parchman**, 2225 Lewis St, Lakewood, 80215, 303.274.7951, **Shirley Wendell**, 6631 S Abilene Way, Centennial, 303.520.7386

Contributions to Rare Bird Alert/Educational Endowment Fund: RBA : Tom Parchman, Mary Katz, Frances Campbell, Mike Henwood. EEF : Walter Watson, Frances Campbell, Norma Kamby, Mike Henwood

Thank you!

What Birds to Look for in May—and Where to Look for Them

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In May, the average high in Denver is 71 degrees and the average low is 44 degrees, up 9 degrees on the high and low from April, although it has reached 96 and fallen to 22. May can have heavy rains and front range flooding caused by cyclonic storms carrying Pacific and Gulf moisture. In 1969 a storm dropped 10 inches of rain on the Denver suburbs. Denver's record 24 hour rainfall of 6.53 inches fell in May 1876. 107 degrees in Holly, Colorado in 1996 set a May record for Colorado.

May is THE month for birding just about anywhere in the state. The more you get out the more you will see. Early in the morning check the trees and bushes on around where you live and you could be surprised by what you find. The trees in your local park can host warblers and vireos as well as grosbeaks and tanagers. Even small parks in your neighborhood like the Welchester Tree Park in Lakewood, located on 8th Ave between Simms and Indiana, can hold great birds like Blackburnian and Black-throated Gray Warbler and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Ovenbirds can be found in the brush and waterthrushes along the creek. All of the western Empidonax (except Pacific-slope) Flycatchers can be found here and who knows, maybe even a rare eastern cousin like an Alder or Yellow-bellied could be found. I've seen many migrants in Cheeseman Park in Denver during lunch time walks.

Flammulated Owls can be heard along the foothills west and north of Golden to Lyons. I have heard them in the lower parts of Golden Gate Canyon State Park and just above White Ranch Open Space Park starting at about 10:00 pm. I have had luck hearing the small owls on Crawford Gulch Road which you can access from Golden Gate Canyon Rd off Hwy 93 on the north edge of Golden. Other places to look and listen for these owls are: Mt. Falcon Park, Boulder Mountain Park and the St. Vrain canyons west of Lyons. When listening for the Flammulated, also listen for Saw-whet and Northern Pygmy-Owls. Poorwill's are also calling in the evening along the foothills. Boreal Owls can still be heard at Cameron Pass.

Migrant traps on the plains can be especially rewarding. The rest area at Last Chance (Colorado 71 and US 36) about 60

miles east of Denver can be incredible. I have seen Blackpoll, Palm, and Black-throated Blue Warbler there as well as Golden-crowned and White-throated Sparrows (5/7/07) and Tammy and I had a Louisiana Waterthrush on 5/9/99. A Connecticut Warbler has also been found here. Another great migrant trap is Crow Valley Campground at Briggsdale, Colorado. Almost every warbler species and I believe every vireo species seen in Colorado has been seen here at one time or another. Even a Costa's Hummingbird has been found here. Hundreds of thrushes can be seen and if you look closely, you can find a Gray-cheeked Thrush mixed in. A Varied Thrush has been here in the fall.

Hasty Campground at John Martin Reservoir 25 miles west of Lamar can be jumping. Mississippi Kites roost here and a Painted Bunting was here in May 2000. Grosbeaks and Tanagers are frequently found here and don't forget to check the mudflats and

stretches of sand at John Martin Reservoir for shorebirds. Piping Plover and Least Tern nest here through the sand areas along the reservoir can be off limits to protect these endangered species' nesting areas. You can walk the edge of the enclosures to look for the plovers and easily see Least Terns as they fly along the shore. If you are lucky you may run into Duane Nelson who has been researching and protecting the terns and plovers for many years. If he has time he may be able to tell you the best areas to look for the plovers without disturbing them. Also watch for Snowy Plovers, which are more common than the Piping.

The area behind Lamar Community College has been a great place in the past for rarities like Mourning and Prairie Warblers. Northern Cardinal and Carolina Wren are seen here regularly. Willow Creek Park just north and east of the college is also a great spot you shouldn't miss. Walk the area east of the creek for migrants. Mississippi Kites nest here and Red-headed Woodpecker can be found in the big trees at the

northwest of the park. Red-bellied Woodpeckers are here in numbers. The Lamar Cemetery at the south side of town hosts Lesser Nighthawk and plenty of migrants.

As long as you are in the southeast part of the state, the area below the dam at Two Buttes (Baca County) has seen rarities like Wood Thrush, Golden-winged, Black-throated Green and Cerulean Warblers. Also look for the Barn Owls that roost in the cliffs.

Places closer to Denver where great birding can be found include Barr Lake State Park (Adams County), Chatfield State Park (Jefferson and Douglas Counties), Cherry Creek State Park (Arapahoe County), Castlewood Canyon State Park (Douglas County) and Belmar Park, Red Rocks Park and the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (Jefferson County). Dixon Lake in Larimer County seems to get more than its share of migrants and rarities and



Photo by Alastair Montgomery

Safe Skies Colorado...Mom was right. Turn off the lights.

As partners with Audubon Society of Greater Denver, DFO has the opportunity to participate in a program that can reduce bird mortality from flying into glass windows as they migrate through Denver at night. According to Audubon point man Joe Bartell, we lose about one billion birds per year or about 5% of our wild bird population as they fly into our skyscrapers every year.

"When tall buildings are in the flight path of birds, the lights interfere with their navigation system. The birds either fly in circles around the building and die of exhaustion, or they collide with the windows". Our recent DFO lecture on bird navigation helped us understand the importance of starlight and other UV light in bird navigation and it's easy to see how the bright lights of our cities could confuse their bird brains.

If lights in tall buildings are extinguished, bird mortality can be reduced by 80%, according to the Field Museum in Chicago, a city that was one of the first to adopt this program. Mayor John Hickenlooper recently endorsed this project, joining many large city mayors already taking part. In the meantime, Audubon is off and running, contacting building property managers and presenting the double win economic and environmental benefits to be gained from turning out the lights.

1. Reduction in bird mortality
2. Electricity expense savings for the building owners – last year the EPA building on Wyncoop tried this program, even bringing in their cleaning crews during the daytime, and ended the trial year having saved 28% of electricity expense.
3. Reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1.8 lbs for every kilowatt hour the lights are on – every little bit helps to retard global warming.

Audubon's Safe Skies working committee, however, is small and needs more dedicated members to help monitor the city buildings, write letters, compile lists of buildings and property managers. Would you be willing to help? If you can't spare any time for committee work, maybe you know a tall building manager or a lawyer or accountant that works downtown. Or maybe you work in a tall building. Maybe you could get the name of the property manager from them or maybe you would even do the leg work yourself, explain the program and provide the resulting feedback to Joe at (720)524-8622.

This is a no-brainer program, a win-win for office building owners and birds alike. But help is needed.

Mom says, "Call Joe" 720.524.8622. Mom is always right.

By Carol Blackard

Additional Reports

Species	Date(s) seen	Comments	Location	County	Observers
Northern Pygmy Owl	3-06	Pair – courtship behavior	Mt. Falcon Park	Jefferson	Mike Henwood, Rob Raker
Northern Pygmy Owl	3-13,17,25	1- calling	Willow Springs Open Space	Jefferson	Mike Henwood
Northern Saw-Whet Owl	2-18	1- perched in juniper tree (photo)	Bonny Reservoir S.P.	Yuma	Bill Wurthele, Paul Yonchek
Bald Eagle	3-10	1- adult	Bear Creek Lake Park	Jefferson	Mike Henwood
N. Flicker Intergrade	3-12	1 male	Bear Creek Lake Park	Jefferson	Mike Henwood

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

May Birds , continued

Pueblo City Park and Valco State Park west of Pueblo should not be forgotten. Lower Latham Reservoir near LaSalle, Loloff Reservoir just northeast of Lower Latham and Beebe Draw south of Lower Latham, all in Weld County, may be the best places to look for shorebirds this spring in the front-range area. Union Reservoir in western Weld County had shoreline a few weeks ago though that might change with the coming runoff. Water is high in many of the big lakes and reservoirs this year and as a result there is no shoreline or mudflats for the shorebirds. This is the time of year to look for White-rumped Sandpipers as they make their annual pass through Colorado and keep your eyes open for Red-necked Phalaropes. Since almost everyone has Internet access, we recommend that you check Cobirds frequently for postings of rarities. I wish I could list all the places to look and bird, but as it is said, the birds are where you find them, and in May, they can be anywhere. Keep your eyes and ears open and good birding.

I'd like to thank Joey Kellner and Karl Stetcher for their contributions to this month's column. If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greatauk@msn.com. All suggestions and contributions are gratefully accepted. By Ira Sanders

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The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is now mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submittals, and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is preferred.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80128, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Feb, May, August, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Mar, Jun, September, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Our web site www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert, 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check the Bird Alert number for last minute trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750, www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 and 7:30 pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7:30 pm, and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats near Denver. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge (January 07) is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver. The *Lark Bunting*, the DFO monthly newsletter, is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members.

Denver Field Ornithologists

2009 Membership Application

Please indicate whether this is a ☐ **New Membership** or a ☐ **Renewal**

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

One Year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting)	\$20.00
One Year Family Membership (First Class Mail Lark Bunting is \$10 more)	\$30.00
Student/Youth Membership (age 21 or younger)	\$5
First class mailing of field trip reports—for those without internet access or who want the paper reports.	\$10 in addition to membership fee
Online reports are free from the web site dfobirders.org	

Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$_____

With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site

Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO awards grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats as well as preservation.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting: E-Mail Address _____

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Burger, 10826 E. Maplewood Place, Englewood, CO 80111-5742

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE MAY 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS													TUESDAY BIRDERS					TOTAL
	2	3	15-17	18	17	23	24	25	29	30	31	31		5	12	19	25	25	
	MCC	ROX	BON	BAR	TWO	AUD	RIG	SOU	WI1	WI2	WI3	WI4		PRO	OLD	BAR	LAI	IDA	
Pied-billed Grebe	2															1			3
Eared Grebe	12		4													6			24
Western Grebe	20	3	4	1										4		3			35
Clark's Grebe			1	1										2					4
American White Pelican			50	2		14		2								11			79
Double-crested Cormorant	14		1	2	1	2		6					104	78	3	3			216
Great Blue Heron	2		10	1	1					2			5	6	4	3	2		36
Snowy Egret					1			2					1	2					6
Black-crowned Night-Heron					1								6	5					12
White-faced Ibis	1		4																5
Turkey Vulture		6	10		3	5			2	2	4				1				33
Canada Goose	16	3	10		4			8					77	59	12	26	3		218
Wood Duck			2	2									5	8		11			26
Gadwall	6		1					2						22		26			59
American Wigeon			2											1		8			12
Mallard	12	2	6	8	5	6		3					9	39	13	37	5	5	150
Blue-winged Teal	4		10		2									7		2			25
Cinnamon Teal																1			1
Northern Shoveler	12		6					2								3			23
Northern Pintail			1																1
Green-winged Teal	2		8																10
Cahwasback			4																4
Redhead			1											2		1			4
Lesser Scaup	12																		12
Bufflehead	8													6					14
Hooded Merganser													1	6					7
Common Merganser						1													1
Ruddy Duck			4																4
Osprey															1				1
Bald Eagle				1															1
Northern Harrier			1			2													3
Sharp-shinned Hawk														2					2
Cooper's Hawk	2	1		1					1	2	1	2		4	2				16
Accipiter sp.						2													2
Broad-winged Hawk				1															1
Swainson's Hawk	4		4	4	1										4	2			19
Red-tailed Hawk	4	1	4		2	4			3	1	2	1		1	3	1		1	28
Ferruginous Hawk							2												2
Rough-legged Hawk																			0
Golden Eagle		1	1																2
American Kestrel	1		2		2	2		1	1							2			11
Prairie Falcon		1																	1
Ring-necked Pheasant			6	3												3			12
Wild Turkey			10					3										6	19
Virginia Rail	1				1														2
Sora	1		1		1														3
American Coot	16		30	25										9		35			115
Killdeer	2	1	10	21				7								13			54
American Avocet			10					4											14
Solitary Sandpiper														1					1
Spotted Sandpiper	4							4					1			1			10
Sanderling			1																1
Long-billed Dowitcher			4																4
Wilson's Phalarope			30																30
Red-necked Phalarope																			0
Franklin's Gull			4																4
Ring-billed Gull	2		6					2						3					13
California Gull								1											1
Ivory Gull																			0
Foster's Tern			4																4
Black Tern			2																2
Rock Pigeon	12							25	7			5			2				51
Eurasian Collared-dove	1		1	2	1														5
Mourning Dove	18	5	20	28	8	4		14	10	7	10	5		11	12	26			176
Barn Owl			1																1
Eastern Screech-Owl			1																1
Great Horned Owl	6		4					1								1			12
Burrowing Owl							1												1
Common Nighthawk			1																1
Chimney Swift			1																1
White-throated Swift		8										2							10
Broad-billed Hummingbird		10				3			8	8	9			3			11	10	62

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE MAY 2009

[illegible]

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE MAY 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS														TUESDAY BIRDERS					TOTAL
	2	3	15-17	18	17	23	24	25	29	30	31	31			5	12	19	25	25	
	MCC	ROX	BON	BAR	TWO	AUD	RIG	SOU	W11	W12	W13	WHE			PRO	OLD	BAR	LAI	IDA	
Yellow-breasted Chat			10			7														17
Western Tanager						2			5	7	7				5	4				31
Green-tailed Towhee									3	3	2								1	9
Spotted Towhee		20	1			4			10	10	14	1			6	1		3		70
Cassin's Sparrow							2													2
Chipping Sparrow	50	30	20		3	6			6	4	5				20	5			4	153
Clay-colored Sparrow	1		4																	5
Brewer's Sparrow	1																			1
Field Sparrow			2																	2
Vesper Sparrow					12										3					15
Lark Sparrow	4		12																	16
Lark Bunting			10																	10
Grasshopper Sparrow							3													3
Fox Sparrow																				0
Song Sparrow	4				5	3						5			7	3	1	8	1	37
Lincoln's Sparrow			1																	1
White-throated Sparrow							1													1
White-crowned Sparrow	14	6	1		2										1		1			25
Dark-eyed Junco									3	5	4						1	20		36
"Gray-headed" race									3	8	4							20		(35)
Northern Cardinal			4																	4
Rose-breasted Grosbeak			1																	1
Black-headed Grosbeak			2		3				6	13	8									32
Blue Grosbeak			1																	1
Lazuli Bunting			1						2	4	6						4			17
Indigo Bunting			8																	8
Red-winged Blackbird	55	2	40	200	29	36		65				12			42	30	40		6	557
Western Meadowlark	17		30	3	3	1		1								2	5			82
Yellow-headed Blackbird	3		1														2			6
Common Grackle	47		10	137	17	4		20				12			4	16	48		3	320
Great-tailed Grackle			1																	1
Brown-headed Cowbird	12	2	30	5	2	14		7	3	3	2	5			4	5	6	2	4	106
Orchard Oriole			6				2													8
Bullock's Oriole	1			32		2		6	1			3					35			82
Pine Grosbeak																		1		1
House Finch	16	4		12	2	6		3		2		5			3	7	5			65
Pine Siskin			20							5								2		27
Lesser Goldfinch		2				1			2	4	3							2		14
"Green-backed" race										3										(3)
"Black-backed" race						1			2	1										(4)
American Goldfinch	25	2	40	6		2			1			4			5	1	1			67
House Sparrow	2		1	8	7			12				1			4	4	6			45
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	1344	161	1058	913	161	243	22	462	159	247	201	333			568	313	578	87	142	7,101
TOTAL SPECIES	65	35	106	44	49	46	12	32	43	47	46	38			52	38	65	25	35	173

* Possible sighting

MCC - McCabe Meadow Park
 ROX - Roxborough State Park
 BON - Bonnie Reservoir
 BAR - Barr Lake State Park
 TWO - Two Ponds and Rocky Flats NWRTs
 AUD - Audubon Center at Chatfield
 RIG - Rigel Ranch
 SOU - South Platte Trail & 88th
 W11 - Willow Springs Open Space Trip 1
 W12 - Willow Springs Open Space Trip 2
 W13 - Willow Springs Open Space Trip 3
 WHE - Wheat Ridge Greenbelt
 PRO - Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt
 OLD - Old Stone House, Bear Creek Greenbelt
 LAI - Lair O' the Bear
 IDA - Idaho Springs Breeding Bird Atlas II

a=adult, i=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only,
 c=calling, s=singing, boldface=rare/unusual, +=also in addition to,
 x=individual data incomplete/not enumerated.



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

June 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44 Number 6

June Field Trips

Saturday, June 6

Fort Collins - Prospect Ponds

Leader: Dave Leatherman, daleatherman@msn.com

Meet Leader at 0730 at the Prospect Ponds Natural Area parking lot: from I-25 take the Prospect exit in Fort Collins. Proceed west about two miles, cross the Poudre River and take the first left on the west side of the river (Sharp Point Drive). Go about 200 yards to the first parking on your left as you go south on Sharp Point. We'll be targeting late migrants, riparian nesters, marsh breeders, and whatever surprises we find! Bring lunch, water, sunscreen and good footwear; please notify Leader if you plan to attend.

Sunday, June 7

Beaver Brook Trail

Leader: Paul Slingsby, (303)422-3728

Meet Leader at 0700 at I-70 exit 253, the Chief Hosa exit, on the north side of I-70. The Beaver Brook Trail is found by going east downhill on Stapleton Drive (a dirt road) in case you miss the Chief Hosa rendezvous. This will be a slow-paced walk of about 5 miles, returning by the Chavez Trail if the narrows by the creek bottom are navigable. Bring a pack with lunch, water and snacks, and wear clothing appropriate for the altitude and terrain. We'll look for nesting flycatchers, tanagers, woodpeckers, nuthatches and other birds of the Ponderosa/Douglas Fir forest and Mountain Mahogany scrubland. Please notify Meredith at (303)280-8576 to register for the trip.

Saturday, June 13

Bailey Nesting Area, Summit County

Leader: Norm Lewis, (303)988-5544

Meet Leader at 0800 at the Wendy's parking lot in Silverthorne. We'll visit a richly diverse habitat that supports a variety of nesting birds: MacGillivray's Warbler, Pine Grosbeak, Golden-Crowned Kinglet and Red-naped Sapsucker are possible as well as nuthatches, vireos, sparrows and flycatchers. Northern Pygmy-Owl has been seen on this trip. We'll check the water treatment facility on Hwy. 9 for Osprey and waterfowl. Plan on a full day with moderate hiking; bring a pack with lunch, water and snacks, and dress for altitude. Please register with our Fearless Leader so the group doesn't leave without you!

Sunday, June 14

Lyons Area

Leader: Raymond Davis, (303)823-5332

Meet Leader at 0830 at the Lyons Park 'n Ride, 1/2 block south of the traffic light on the Main Street. Join Davis for this ever-popular trip along Old South Road in search of warblers, vireos, raptors and Canyon Wren; search for Bobolink in nearby fields, then enjoy your lunch while watching for nuthatches, bluebirds and grosbeaks from Davis' back deck which borders acres of open space. Then you're invited to help see what's in Davis' 40 bluebird nest boxes! This trip involves a moderate amount of leisurely walking, and is well-suited for those who require ease of accessibility. Call Meredith at (303)280-8576 for carpooling from the Denver Metro area.

Continued on next page

June Field Trips, continued

Saturday, June 20**Fort Morgan Wildlife Areas**

Leaders: Peter Walker, (970)867-6729, and Joe Rigli

Meet Leaders at 0800 at the City Park in Fort Morgan, at the parking lot off of Highway 52, on the east side of the west part of the park. We will travel by van to visit area ranches, reservoirs and State wildlife areas in search of the summer inhabitants of the plains: buntings longspurs and sparrows are probable, with a good chance for Bobolink and American Bittern. Pete is a Fish Biologist with the DOW and a veteran birder; he says that with adequate Spring rain-fall the wildflowers should be spectacular. Joe is a native of the area and is a rancher, teacher, wildlife artist and experienced birder. This is a space-limited trip; please register with Meredith at (303) 280-8576. Bring lunch, water and sunscreen. Habitat Stamp is required.

Sunday, June 21**Palmer Lake Trails**

Leader: John Drummond, jxdrummond@aol.com

(719)488-3700. Meet Leader at 0715 at the Palmer Lake parking lot by the railroad tracks off of S.R. 105. There is a restroom here. Expect a fairly strenuous uphill hike of about 2 miles (4 miles round trip) in search of all the early summer inhabitants of Ponderosa Pine and Scrub Oak habitat, including Ovenbird. Bring a pack with lunch, water and snacks; wear layers for changing altitude, and sturdy hikers. Trip is space-limited; must register with Leader in advance, e-mail preferred.

Saturday, June 27**Chatfield State Park**

Leader: Joey Kellner, (303)978-1748 vireo1@comcast.net

Meet Leader at 0700 at the Platte River parking lot, just east of where Kingfisher Bridge crosses the river. Spend a fun morning exploring this popular park as only Joey can present it, in search of riparian, lake and streamside birds and other wildlife. This is a combined State Parks/DFO birdwalking adventure. Half-day trip; lunch optional, State Parks Pass required.

Sunday, June 28**Rocky Mountain National Park**

Leader: Bob Righter, (303)692-8529

Meet Leader at 0800 at the Beaver Meadows Visitors' Center, east of the Beaver Meadows entrance to the Park on U.S. 36. We will form carpools from here. Full day of birding; bring lunch, wear sturdy hikers and be prepared for variable weather. We are likely to see Mountain nesters, bluebirds, kinglets, woodpeckers, flycatchers, and a good chance at Rosy-finch, pipit, and Ptarmigan in summer finery. Bob is a veteran Park birder and knows its secrets!

Friday, July 3 to Sunday, July 5**North Park - Joint Trip with BBC**

Leader: Chuck Lowrie, (303) 455-8417 Meet at Safeway parking lot on east side of U.S. 40 in Fraser at 0900 on Friday morning. (Fraser is a 2 hour drive from Denver.) Make reservations for Friday & Saturday nights in Walden at the North Park Inn, (970-723-4271), or the Chedsey Motel (970) 723-8201. A State Parks Pass and (if <65 Yrs.) a Colorado Wildlife Habitat Stamp are required. Call Leader if going and to arrange Carpooling. Bring water, snacks, lunches, insect repellent and clothing for variable weather.

From *National Geographic* April 2009 issue:

"Some birds that look very different - say, bright hummingbirds and drab nightjars - are long-lost kin. Some never considered together, like songbirds and parrots, are really close relatives. Others that act similarly, such as falcons and other birds of prey, may be genetically unrelated. Those are just some of the sure-to-cause-a-flap findings of the Early Bird Project, a landmark study led by Chicago's Field Museum that compared the genes of 169 species and sequenced nuclear DNA from 15 chromosomes to fill in big evolutionary holes. The bird branch of zoology has always been a thorny one, with little fossil evidence to show stages of development, making anatomy, appearance and behavior the main means of gauging kinship -- until now. With five years' worth of new data, other long-held beliefs may also fly right out the window". --Jeremy Berlin

April Field Trip Summaries

Apr 4, Saturday *Red Rocks (RED)* Cancelled due to weather.

Apr 5, Sunday *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Kathy Mihm Dunning. **Observers:** Betsy Shaw. **Time:** 0830-1400. **Distance:** 4.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, riparian, grassland, elevation 5000'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, becoming mostly cloudy, 15-39°F, north wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 47 species, 3176 individuals. **Highlights:** Watching an immature Bald Eagle swoop down and score a nice large fish; fly off closely followed by two additional immature Bald Eagles obviously hoping to 'share'.

Apr 11, Saturday *Ponderosa Pine Preserve (PON)*

Leader(s): Mary Ann Bonnell. **Time:** 0830-1000. **Distance:** .75 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine forest, elevation 6000'. **Weather:** Rain and wind, very poor condition, north wind, 10-15mph. **Totals:** 8 species, 28 individuals.

Apr 18, Saturday *Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (ROC)*
Cancelled due to weather; rescheduled for Apr 25.

Apr 19, Sunday *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Mary Keithler. **Observers:** Donald Beltz, Pam and John Breitsen, Pam Norris, Deb Mallory, Patty Echelmeyer, Lois Levinson, Betsy Shaw, Pauline Ide, Colleen Nunn, Lisa Lubin, Warren Finch. **Time:** 0800-1500. **Distance:** 11 miles by car, .75 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Open water, riparian, wetlands, grasslands, elevation 5700'. **Weather:** Sunny, 39-56°F, southeast wind, 4-8mph. **Totals:** 64 species, 1323 individuals. **Highlights:** Awesome post-storm fallout, McCown's Longspur, Mountain Bluebirds

Apr 25, Saturday *Bear Creek Lake Park (BEA)*

Leader(s): Mike Henwood. **Observers:** Karen Clark, Joe Lupfer, Jean Frazier, Roberta Lohr, Marlene Swalm, Barbara Thomas, Jannette Wesley. **Time:** 0700-1200. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, shortgrass prairie, lake and shoreline, elevation 5600-5700'. **Weather:** Cloudy, overcast, drizzle, 40-45°F, north-west wind, 10mph. **Totals:** 44 species, 431 individuals. **Highlights:** Great close-up look at Dipper. Two Great Horned Owl nests and chicks. Cooper's Hawk sitting on nest. Lots of Yellow-rumped Warblers, Audubon and Myrtle's. Pair of Wood Ducks.

Apr 25, Saturday *Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (ROC)*

Leader(s): David Rhoades. **Observers:** Don Beltz, Sarah Bradlwy, Jean Davis, Jim Duggan, Patty Echelmeyer, Derek Hankins, Pauline Ide, Nancy Osborn, Paul Slingsby. **Time:** 0800-1300. **Distance:** 6 miles by car, .5 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Prairie, lakes, riparian, woodlands, elevation 5250'. **Weather:** Cloudy, windy, 40°F. **Totals:** 64 species, 539 individuals. **Highlights:** Worm-eating Warbler, Willet, Long-billed Curlew, Avocet, Eastern Bluebird.

Apr 26, Sunday *Dowdy Draw/Mesa Trail (DOW)* No report available at time of printing.

Tuesday Birders

Apr 7

Chatfield State Park (CHA)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 45 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 12 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Large reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, grassy areas, shoreline, elevation 5430'. **Weather:** Calm, sunny, 50-70°F, west-southwest wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 32 species, 274 individuals.

Apr 14

Star K Ranch, Aurora (STA)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Liz Wickard. **Observers:** 47 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 2.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, ponds, grassland, wetland, willow, cattails, elevation 5300'.

Continued on next page

April Field Trip Summaries, continued

Weather: Cloudy to sunny, 59-67°F, variable wind, 0-7mph. **Totals:** 24 species, 197 individuals.

Apr 21 *Hawk Watch at Dinosaur Ridge, Red Rocks, Morrison Park (HAW)*

Leader(s): Else Van Erp and Dave Hill. **Observers:** 30 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 5 miles by car, 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, transitional zone with juniper and Ponderosa pine, shrubland and city park, elevation 5700-6600'. **Weather:** Clear to cloudy, 61-65°F, south wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 25 species, 116 individuals.

Apr 28 *Belmar Historic Park (BEL)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 38 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 2.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, grassland, wetland, man-made lake, elevation 5400'. **Weather:** Mild, sunny, 43-61°F, variable wind, 0-3mph. **Totals:** 49 species, 1037 individuals.

Audubon Reports (some) Progress

Maybe the message is getting through, after all. The government's communications czar says his agency, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), will finally take a closer look at the impact television, radio, and cell phone towers are having on birds and the environment.

Biologists believe the nation's 138,000 communications towers, which range from tiny antennae mounted in church steeples to steel spires soaring 2,000 feet into the sky, kill between 5 million and 50 million birds a year. Historically, the biggest kills—thousands of birds at a time—have occurred on cloudy nights during fall migration at tall, lighted TV towers. "The birds appear to be attracted by the lights," then die in "gruesome" collisions with girders and guy wires, says Art Clark, an ornithologist in Buffalo, New York, who has studied the problem for decades.

Big tower kills have become rare in recent years for reasons that aren't clear, he and researchers admit. But ornithologists are alarmed by a telecommunications revolution that is adding thousands of new spires to the landscape. Three years ago the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) recommended that tower builders take voluntary steps, such as bunching towers and using fewer support wires, to reduce the threat. But efforts to convince the FCC to consider the effects on birds when approving tower licenses didn't get far—and neither did bids to win government and industry funding to study the problem.

Both initiatives may now be gaining some traction. In August FCC chief Michael Powell opened a formal inquiry into tower kills, inviting public comment on everything from needed scientific studies to possible solutions. In part, the inquiry was the result of legal pressure from conservation groups, including the Forest Conservation Council and the American Bird Conservancy. The groups have challenged dozens of tower permits across the nation.

Recently, Michigan has funded studies that could answer why birds seem particularly drawn to certain towers, and what can be done to keep them out of harm's way. Elsewhere, the U.S. Coast Guard will soon begin a study of 20 of its emergency-broadcast communication towers. "We're taking baby steps," says FWS biologist Al Manville, an expert on the issue. "But at least we're moving."



Millions of Missing Birds, Vanishing in Plain Sight

Last week, the Audubon Society released a new report describing the sharp and startling population decline of some of the most familiar and common birds in America: several kinds of sparrows, the Northern bobwhite, the Eastern meadowlark, the common grackle and the common tern. The average decline of the 20 species in the Audubon Society's report is 68 percent.

Forty years ago, there were an estimated 31 million bobwhites. Now there are 5.5 million. Compared to the hundred-some condors presently in the wild, 5.5 million bobwhites sounds like a lot of birds. But what matters is the 25.5 million missing and the troubles that brought them down — and are all too likely to bring down the rest of them, too. So this is not extinction, but it is how things look before extinction happens.

The word "extinct" somehow brings to mind the birds that seem like special cases to us, the dodo or the great auk or the passenger pigeon. Most people would never have had a chance to see dodos and great auks on their remote islands before they were decimated in the 17th and 19th centuries. What is hard to remember about passenger pigeons isn't merely their once enormous numbers. It's the enormous numbers of humans to whom their comings and goings were a common sight and who supposed, erroneously, that such unending clouds of birds were indestructible. We recognize the extraordinary distinctness of the passenger pigeon now because we know its fate, killed off largely by humans. But we have moralized it thoroughly without ever really taking it to heart.



The question is whether we will see the distinctness of the field sparrow — its number is down from 18 million 40 years ago to 5.8 million — only when the last pair is being kept alive in a zoo somewhere. We love to finally care when the death watch is on. It makes us feel so very human.

Like you, I've been reading dire reports of declining species for many years now. They have the value of causing us to pay attention to species in trouble, and the sad fact is that the only species likely to endure are the ones we humans manage to pay attention to. There was a time when it was better, if you were a nonhuman species, to be ignored by humans because we trapped, shot or otherwise exploited all of the ones that got our attention. But in the past 40 years, we have killed all those millions of birds or, let us say, unintentionally caused a dramatic population loss, simply by going about business as usual.

Agriculture has intensified. So has development. Open space has been sharply reduced. We have simply pursued our livelihoods. We knew it was inimical to wolves and mountain lions. But we somehow trusted that all the innocent little birds were here to stay. What they actually need to survive, it turns out, is a landscape that is less intensely human.

The Audubon Society portrait of common bird species in decline is really a report on who humans are. Let me offer a proposition about *Homo sapiens*. We are the only species on earth capable of an ethical awareness of other species and, thus, the only species capable of happily ignoring that awareness. So far, our economic interests have proved to be completely incompatible with all but a very few forms of life. It's not that we believe that other species don't matter. It's that, historically speaking, it hasn't been worth believing one way or another. I don't suppose that most Americans would actively kill a whippoorwill if they had the chance. Yet in the past 40 years its number has dropped by 1.6 million.

In our everyday economic behavior, we seem determined to discover whether we can live alone on earth. E.O. Wilson has argued eloquently and persuasively that we cannot, that who we are depends as much on the richness and diversity of the biological life around us as it does on any inherent quality in our genes. Environmentalists of every stripe argue that we must somehow begin to correlate our economic behavior — by which I mean every aspect of it: production, consumption, habitation — with the welfare of other species.

This is the premise of sustainability. But the very foundation of our economic interests is self-interest, and in the survival of other species we see way too little self to care. The trouble with humans is that even the smallest changes in our behavior require an epiphany. And yet compared to the fixity of other species, the narrowness of their habitats, the strictness of their diets, the precision of the niches they occupy, we are flexibility itself.

We look around us, expecting the rest of the world's occupants to adapt to the changes that we have caused, when, in fact, we have the right to expect adaptation only from ourselves.

By Verlyn Klinkenborg

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So Sayeth the Speaker...April 27 Meeting

Chris Pague, Senior Conservation Ecologist for the Nature Conservancy in Colorado, took DFO members on an amazing armchair tour of the world's major grasslands. Along the way he highlighted some of the fascinating birds and mammals native to these different regions, from Bison to Gazelles, from Demoiselle Cranes to Chestnut-collared Longspurs.

Chris took us through the shortgrass prairies of eastern Colorado, the savannas of East Africa, the steppe lands of Mongolia, the Orinoco's Llanos region of northern South America which John Drummond had introduced us to last November, the grass and shrublands of Patagonia, and the grassy areas of northern Australia.

The layman's definition of a grassland is an area "too dry for trees to grow but too wet for shrubs and cactus to survive." Most of the biomass in grasslands exists underground and ranges from the roots of plants to the insects to the nematodes to the soil bacteria. The Nature Conservancy has staff and projects in all these regions and is currently evaluating "How much do we have to do [to achieve a sustainable planet], and how long do we have to do it?"

Humans are believed to have evolved in the grasslands of Africa and even in the larger "Savannistan" regions of Asia. The temperate grasslands are among the least protected in the world with 70% already converted from their natural state by various human uses, and less than 2% conserved in any way.

The threats to grasslands are huge and numerous: agriculture and urbanization (42% of Colorado grasslands have been plowed or developed at a rate of 100,000 acres per year); oil and gas development; invasive species; incompatible grazing such as overgrazing leading to desertification in Patagonia and parts of Africa; fire suppression; and hydrological alterations of the land.

While the picture looks bleak, there are some glimmers of hope. The Nature Conservancy has set a goal of protecting a half million acres of grassland in the five year period starting in 2007. To date they have protected over 150,000 acres in Colorado! The Nature Conservancy's five areas of greatest concern in Colorado are the Greater Pawnee Prairie, the Arapahoe Prairie (Lowry), the Peak to Prairie region east of Colorado Springs, Laramie Foothills of Larimer County, and the Prairie Canyonlands in southeastern Colorado.

This was an important message for us to hear. It offered DFO members a broader context in which to understand what we already know of the plight of grassland birds here in our own state. Thanks to Chris from all DFO members for the important work he is doing!

by Chris A. Blakeslee



Congratulations!

Ann Bonnell Receives Ptarmigan Award

At the April 2009 DFO meeting Ann Bonnell was presented with Denver Field Ornithologists highest award, a framed photo of a White-tailed Ptarmigan in winter plumage. Ann was raised on Wildlife Refuges and became a biology teacher. For the past 30 years in the Denver area she has been teacher, trainer, Board member, and Birder Expert. For DFO she has led the Tuesday Birders on about 50 hikes a year for the past 25 years. Ann has educated countless people about birds and environmental issues through her work at Roxborough State Park, South Platte Park, Denver Botanic Gardens, Audubon Society of Greater Denver and DFO.

Welcome New and Renewing Members!

New Members

Newell Grant, 1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood Village, CO 80121 303.761.9967

Pam Norris, 28 Martin Lane, Englewood, CO 80113

Judith Sholl, PO Box 22980, Denver, CO 80222 303.837.8706

Peggy Wait, 806 W Peakview Ave, Littleton, CO 80120 303.738.9349

Renewals

Bryan & Kristin Arnold, 6529 S Allison Ct, Littleton, CO 80123 720.318.8951

Larry Brennan, 398 Steele St, Denver, CO 80206 303.331.6808

Jim Fischer, 7650 W 68th Ave #308, Arvada, CO 80004 303.940.3677

Kathy Hamilton & Greg Lengsfeld, 6191 S Salida Ct, Aurora, CO 80016 303.766.6723

Pat McClearn, 444 Cherry St, Denver, CO 80220 303.322.1900

David Walker, PO Box 934, Indian Hills, CO 80454 303.697.3897

Contributions to Rare Bird Alert/Educational Endowment Fund:

RBA: David Walker, Pam Norris, Jim Fischer

EEF: Pam Norris

Thank you!

What's in a Name?

Louis Marie Panteleon Costa, Marquis de Beau-Regard (now there's a name!) was a Sardinian aristocrat (1806-1864) whose specialty was hummingbirds. He was an avid collector and accomplished amateur ornithologist, archeologist and historian. Jules Bourcier named this particular hummingbird after the Marquis.

Did you ever wonder why a man named Georg Wilhelm Steller managed having a Jay, Eider, Sea Eagle and a sea lion named after him? He was in fact a German naturalist and explorer in the service of Mother Russia. Born 1709, he accompanied Vitus Bering on an expedition (1738-1742) to Alaska and Kamchatka and kept very detailed journals. He published a Journal of a Voyage with Bering 1741-1742 in 1743. He died in 1746.

Mr. Stellere discovered the sea eagle and the eider but the jay was posthumously named after him by Johann Gmelin thanks to the journals explicitly describing the bird.

Good birding to all,

Nifia

Source: "Whose Bird?"—Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins

What Birds to Look for in June—and Where to Look for Them

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In June, the average high in Denver is 81 degrees and the average low is 52 degrees, up 10 and 8 degrees on the high and low from May, although it reached 104 in 1994 and fell to 30 in 1951. Historically, June starts eastern Colorado's tornado season marked by severe thunderstorms and high winds. In 1977, a tornado in southeastern Colorado produced 260 mph winds and on June 13, 1984, hailstones as big as grapefruits fell on Denver causing 500 million dollars damage.

As June rolls in the migration of passerines has ended and the local birds are nesting and feeding young. Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspurs are nesting on the Pawnee Grasslands and although the McCown's are easier to find, the Chestnut-collared are there if you know to look in the taller grass. One such area is southeast of the intersection of US Hwy 85 and Weld County Road 114, near the U.S.D.A. High Plains Research Station. You are allowed to walk in that pasture, as I have done many times in the past as long as you don't disturb any research projects and close the gate behind you. Look for the black V inside the white tail feathers and the all-black under parts of the male as he skylarks overhead. While you are in the area, head east to shorter grass for the McCown's Longspur while watching for Burrowing Owl, Brewer's and Grasshopper Sparrows as well as Loggerhead Shrike.

Orchard Orioles are not the easiest bird to find on the Front Range, but I have consistently found them at Barr Lake State Park, just off I-76 east of Brighton. The meadow west of the Nature Center footbridge near the Neidrach Trail is a good place as well as the open area east of the banding station and west of the Pioneer Trail. Don't forget to watch the prairie east of the Denver-Hudson Canal for Bullock's and Orchard Orioles but don't rule out Baltimore Oriole either as the Bullock's eastern cousin has also been seen here in recent years. At least 1 pair of Blue Grosbeak's was here in

2008 in the prairie and along the canal east of the footbridge.

As you may want to bird in the mountains to escape the early summer heat and see birds that don't normally nest on the front range, the Alfred M. Bailey Bird Nesting Area in the Arapaho National Forest is a mecca in the mountains for high altitude birds. Nesting birds include: Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsuckers, 3-toed Woodpecker, Olive-sided, Dusky and Cordilleran Flycatchers, Gray and Steller's Jays, Red and White-breasted Nuthatches, MacGillivray's Warbler and Fox, Lincoln's and White-crowned Sparrows. You may also find Pine Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch and Red Crossbill. To get here, take I-70 to exit 205 (Dillon) and

take Hwy 9 north for 7.4 miles and turn left on Rock Creek Road. Drive 1.2 miles west to a sign for Rock Creek Trailhead where you turn left and continue for 1.5 miles to the parking area. This road is steep and narrow and not recommended for trailers. Hike the Rock Creek Trail for ½ mile to one of several paths that will take you into the 7-acre meadow. Make sure you take lots of bug spray or even mosquito netting as this area is great for birds but also for biting and sucking bugs.



Photo by Carel Blackard

Hepatic Tanager is a Colorado rarity that is becoming easier to find in the state. They are gaining a foothold near Kim, Colorado on a private ranch but a public area where they were found in 2003 is just off I-25 at exit 42 south of Walsenburg. At this exit, there is a road on the west side of the highway that goes south for a short distance and then curves west and crosses railroad tracks. Park here and watch the trees to the north of the road for the tanagers. While you are in the area, and have already made the trek to the southern part of the state, be sure to stop and bird at Lathrop State Park west of Walsenburg on Hwy 160. While you are there walking through the junipers, watch out for bears.

Although the hectic pace of May is behind us, rarities still show up in Colorado as evidenced by the Lawrence's Goldfinch that was in Grand Junction in 2007.

On an entomological note, fireflies can be found in late June and early July in Colorado in muggy wetlands at lower elevations. The Colorado Nature Almanac tells me that these reminders of my childhood in Illinois can be found at:

Continued on next page

April Additional Reports

Species	Date	Number	Location	County	Observers & comments
Wild (?) Turkey	Apr. 8-18	3	East of Washington Park	Denver	Cindy Johnstone (pictures), Linda Neely, Rachel Kellie
Common Loon	Apr 3-7	1	Walker Pil	Douglas	U&H
Common Loon	Apr 26	1	Walker Pil	Douglas	U&H
White-faced Ibis	Apr 24	2-20	Walker Pil	Douglas	U&H
Sandhill Crane	Apr. 6	250	NW Elbert County	Elbert	Debbie Trujillo
Sandhill Crane	Apr. 10	150+	Lakewood	Jefferson	Rick Brune
White-throated Swift	Apr. 7	6	Castle Rock	Douglas	Barbara Spagnuolo About half a dozen seen flying about and were very chatty too
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Apr 30	1	Frankdown	Douglas	U&H
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Apr 30	1	Walker Pil	Douglas	U&H
Savannah Sparrow	Apr 19	1	Winkler Ranch	Douglas	U&H
Black-headed Grosbeak	Apr 30	1	Frankdown	Douglas	U&H
Lazuli Bunting	Apr. 18	1	Louviers	Douglas	Tom Halverstadt, coming to feeder during 2-day snowstorm
Glossy Ibis	Apr. 19-25	1	Chatfield State Park	Douglas	Bill Schmoker, Joey Kellner, M. Obs.
Dunlin	Apr 4	Alt P 1	Lower Latham Reservoir	Weld	> Joey Kellner, Dick Schottler, Paul Differding
		one dx m., one calling			
Broad-winged Hawk	Apr 4		Chatfield State Park	Douglas	Joey Kellner
Mountain Bluebird	Apr 18	3000+	Chatfield State Park	Douglas	Joey Kellner, M. Obs (Huge Number)
Rusty Blackbird	Apr 19	1	Chatfield State Park	Douglas	Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak, Paul Differding
Rusty Blackbird	Apr 24	2	West of Last Chance	Washington	Joey Kellner, Dick Schottler, Paul Differding

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

What Birds to Look for in June—and Where to Find Them, continued

Valley View Hot Springs at the north end of San Luis Valley (largest population of fireflies in the state); Comanche National Grassland, Picture Canyon, south of Springfield; Bonny State Park north of Burlington on the south shore of the reservoir; Roxborough State Park southeast of Denver; and Sawhill and Walden Ponds in Boulder. Again, remember the bug spray. If the fireflies are out so are their relatives.

By Ira Sanders

If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greatauki@msn.com. All suggestions and contributions are gratefully accepted.

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Joyce Takamine, Dick Kolbe, Dick Schottler
and Alison Hilf.

The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is now mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submittals, and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is required.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80128, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net

Additional Reports: Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 12216 E. Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Feb, May, August, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, dacbcCook@comcast.net

Mar, Jun, September, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Our web site www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert, 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check the Bird Alert number for last minute trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750, www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 and 7:30 pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7:30 pm, and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats near Denver. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge (January 07) is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver. The *Lark Bunting*, the DFO monthly newsletter, is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members.

Denver Field Ornithologists

2009 Membership Application

Please indicate whether this is a **New Membership** or a **Renewal**

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

One Year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting)	\$20.00
One Year Family Membership (First Class Mail Lark Bunting is \$10 more)	\$30.00
Student/Youth Membership (age 21 or younger)	\$5
First class mailing of field trip reports—for those without internet access or who want the paper reports.	\$10 in addition to membership fee
Online reports are free from the web site dfobirders.org	
Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert	\$ ____
<i>With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site</i>	
Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund	\$ ____
<i>DFO awards grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats as well as preservation.</i>	
Name: _____	
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____	_____

Electronic Lark Bunting: E-Mail Address _____

**Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Burger, 10826 E. Maplewood Place, Englewood, CO 80111-5742**

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE JUNE 2008

SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS								TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL
	6	7	13	14	20	21	27	28	9	16	23	30	
DATE	POU	BEA	BAI	LYO	FOR	PAL	CHA	ROC	LOW	LAI	CHA	REY	
LOCATION													
Pied-billed Grebe	2				8						2		12
Horned Grebe											1		1
Eared Grebe					2								2
Western Grebe	2				5		2				2		11
Clark's Grebe					1								1
American White Pelican	0			2	52	4	0				5		78
Double-crested Cormorant				1	12		4				2		19
American Osprey					8								8
Great Blue Heron	5				5	1	3			3	2		19
Snowy Egret	2												2
Green Heron	1												1
Black-crowned Night-Heron											1		1
Turkey Vulture	1	1		5		1	2		1	2	4		17
Snow Goose					1								1
"White morph"					1								(1)
Canada Goose	35		25	4	4		40				39		147
Wood Duck							1						1
Gadwall			1		2								3
Mallard	10		12	5	15	1	0		1	5	5		60
Blue-winged Teal	2				12								14
Cinnamon Teal	1				5		2						8
Northern Shoveler			7										7
Green-winged Teal			1		2								3
Redhead					8								8
Lesser Scaup													0
Common Merganser				8									8
Ruddy Duck					5								5
Osprey	2		3										5
Bald Eagle				1									1
Northern Harrier					1								1
Sharp-shinned Hawk												1	1
Cooper's Hawk			1	1						1			3
Swainson's Hawk				2	10						1		13
Red-tailed Hawk	2	2	2	2	4	1		1		2	2	1	19
western jays					4								(4)
Ferruginous Hawk					4								4
Rough-legged Hawk													0
Golden Eagle									1				1
American Kestrel	2			2	10				1		3		18
Peregrine Falcon	1												1
Ring-necked Pheasant					1								1
White-tailed Ptarmigan								2					2
Wild Turkey					8								8
Northern Bobwhite					3								3
Virginia Rail	1				1		4				3		9
Sora						1							1
American Coot					15								15
Killdeer	4				8		1						14
Spotted Sandpiper	1		1		2	5							9
Long-billed Dowitcher													0
Wilson's Snipe						3	1						4
Wilson's Phalarope					1								1
Red-necked Phalarope													0
California Gull					23								23
Ivory Gull													0
Rock Pigeon	30			9									39
Band-tailed Pigeon						1							1
Eurasian Collared-dove	4				4		2						10

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE JUNE 2009

SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS								TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL
	6	7	13	14	20	21	27	28	9	16	23	30	
DATE	POU	BEA	BAI	LYO	FOR	PAL	CHA	ROC	LOW	LAI	CHA	REY	
LOCATION													
Mourning Dove	20	2		12	30	1	6				4		75
Burrowing Owl					2								2
Common Nighthawk				1	1								2
Common Poorwill		1											1
White-throated Swift		1		3		1			1				6
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	1	30	7	7		8	8	6	6	14	8	7	111
Rufous Hummingbird													0
Belted Kingfisher	2			1	1		1						5
Williamson's Sapsucker								4					4
Red-naped Sapsucker			2										2
Downy Woodpecker	2			2			3			2	2		11
Hairy Woodpecker						1		2				1	4
Northern Flicker	5		1	2			3	2	1	1	5	2	22
"Red-shafted" race	(5)		(1)	(2)			(3)						(11)
Olive-sided Flycatcher		2	1										3
Western Wood-Pewee	4	5	2	5	1		7	1	4	4	9		42
Least Flycatcher		1					4						5
Hammond's Flycatcher		2						2				1	5
Dusky Flycatcher						6		1					7
Cordilleran Flycatcher		13		2		2				9		6	32
Buff-breasted Flycatcher													0
Say's Phoebe											3		3
Western Kingbird					18		3		1		8		30
Eastern Kingbird	4				4		1						9
Loggerhead Shrike					1								1
Plumbeous Vireo		9				5				1		3	18
Warbling Vireo	10	12	5			4	2	10	4	2	1	9	58
Red-eyed Vireo	1												1
Gray Jay			1										1
Steller's Jay			4	2		2		2		1		3	14
Blue Jay	1			2	5								8
Pinyon Jay				2									2
Clark's Nutcracker								2					2
Black-billed Magpie	1	3	2	3		2	6	4	2	9	22		50
American Crow	1	5	3			1			1			10	21
Common Raven		1	2	1				2				4	10
Horned Lark					39			2					41
Tree Swallow			10	5			5	6	1		5		32
Violet-green Swallow		1	20	15				10		16	1		65
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	20				6		2			9	3		40
Bank Swallow							2				1		3
Cliff Swallow	75			2	400	48	15		1		15		558
Barn Swallow	30			1	17		3	2	3		6		62
Black-capped Chickadee	5	1		1			1			5	1	3	17
Mountain Chickadee		3	6			2		1		3		3	18
Red-breasted Nuthatch												1	1
White-breasted Nuthatch				3		2	1	2		2	3		13
Pygmy Nuthatch		2	3	2				2				1	10
Rock Wren		1			1								2
Canyon Wren		1		1									2
House Wren	15	2		9		1	45	20	3	14	19	6	134
Marsh Wren	2												2
American Dipper										1			1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		5	12					6				1	24
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher						4	1			1			6
Western Bluebird				1				4				1	6
Mountain Bluebird				7				4					11
Townsend's Solitaire										1			1

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE JUNE 2009														
SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS								TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL	
	6	7	13	14	20	21	27	28	9	16	23	30		
LOCATION	POU	BEA	BAI	LYO	FOR	PAL	CHA	ROC	LOW	LAI	CHA	REY		
Hermit Thrush		4				2						1	7	
American Robin	25	14	8	2	4	2	10	4	6	8	13	12	108	
Gray Catbird				2			4		2	3	1		12	
Northern Mockingbird					4					1			5	
European Starling	20			2	2		8			2	38		72	
Cedar Waxwing	2			4			3			15	3		27	
Virginia's Warbler						2							2	
Yellow Warbler	10		2	4	2	2	38		2	17	22	1	98	
Yellow-rumped Warbler		4	2			2		2				4	14	
"Myrtle" race												1	(1)	
"Audubon's" race			2			2						3	(7)	
American Redstart							3						3	
Ovenbird						6							6	
MacGillivray's Warbler		1	2			1						2	6	
Common Yellowthroat	5		2		1	4	6				5		23	
Wilson's Warbler			7						1				8	
Yellow-breasted Chat				1			6		4		5		16	
Western Tanager	1	11				4				1		5	22	
Green-tailed Towhee						4		2				2	8	
Spotted Towhee				5		6	1		5	6	1	1	25	
Cassin's Sparrow					8								8	
Chipping Sparrow		7		1		2		4		4		3	21	
Vesper Sparrow						4	1	2	1		1		8	
Lark Sparrow				3	9		5		3		5		25	
Lark Bunting					20								20	
Savannah Sparrow				3		4							7	
Grasshopper Sparrow					2		5						7	
Fox Sparrow			1										1	
Song Sparrow	2		2				1		2	8	3	1	18	
Lincoln's Sparrow			3										3	
White-crowned Sparrow			2					4					6	
Dark-eyed Junco		3	5			3							11	
"Gray-headed" race		(3)	5			3							(11)	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1												1	
Black-headed Grosbeak	2	2		3		2			3	3		3	18	
Blue Grosbeak	1			1	5				3				10	
Lazuli Bunting		1		1		2			6	1		1	14	
Bobolink				5									5	
Red-winged Blackbird	50			4	80	6	24				9		163	
Western Meadowlark	3			2	25	4	9		7		8		58	
Yellow-headed Blackbird	5				21								26	
Brewer's Blackbird							1						1	

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE JUNE 2009

[illegible]



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

July 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44, Number 7



July Field Trips

Friday, July 3 to Sunday, July 5

North Park – Joint Trip with BBC

Leader: Chuck Lowrie, (303) 455-8417. Meet at Safeway parking lot on east side of US 40 in Fraser at 0900 on Friday morning (Fraser is a 2 hour drive from Denver.) Make reservations for Friday & Saturday nights in Walden at the North Park Inn, (970) 723-4271, or the Chedsey Motel, (970) 723-8201. A state parks pass and (if under 65 years) a Colorado Wildlife Habitat Stamp are required. Call leader if going and to arrange carpooling from Denver. Bring water, snacks, lunch, insect repellent and clothing for variable weather.

Saturday, July 11

Quincy Reservoir in Aurora

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell, (303) 739-2428. Must register with leader for meeting time and place. Mary Ann is head naturalist for Aurora and is eager to share the area's bird life with us. New birders as well as "seasoned watchers" are welcome on this half-day trip. Bring sunscreen, bug spray and water.

Sunday, July 12

O'Fallon Park and Lair O' the Bear

Leader: Alison Kondler (303) 904-9140 or cell (303) 704-5783. Meet at 7:30am at C-470 and Morrison Road Exit at the parking lot just east of the gas station to carpool. The primary focus on this trip will be bird calls and songs, so if you'd like to tune up your auditory skills this is the trip for you! ½ day, lunch optional.

Thursday, July 16

Cherry Creek State Park

Leader: Mary Keithler (303) 771-1421. Meet at the Marina at 0730. We'll especially search for family groups of Sora, Virginia Rails and avocets – and Black Chinned Hummingbirds! Bring bug spray, sunscreen, water, and snacks for this half-day, weekday trip. Parks pass needed.

Saturday, July 18

Golden Gate Canyon State Park

Leader: Paula Hansley. (720) 890-2628. Meet at 0730 at NW corner of Park 'n' Ride lot at I-70 and Ward Road for carpooling. Aspen groves and ponderosa pine woods have montane nesters such as flycatchers and sapsuckers. ½ day trip, bring Parks Pass. Lunch optional. Picnic tables available.

Sunday, July 19

Brainard Lake, Fawbrook Inn and South St. Vrain area

Leaders: Joanna Chan and Chishum Kwong (720) 304-2073. Meet at 0630 at Park 'n' Ride at the Superior/Louisville exit of Boulder Turnpike (and McCaslin Blvd) on north side near Colonial Theater. Carpooling important – limit 3 cars and 14 people plus leaders and their car. Trip will include a moderate, high-altitude hike at the lake, followed by feeder watching at the Inn, and highlight – hummingbird *banding* at the Bouricius home in S. St. Vrain canyon. This will be a treat arranged by the leaders who work with Steve and Debbie and the hummers! Bring lunch and water and plan on a trip ending about 3. Call Patty Echeimeyer (303) 233-4947 to register by Wednesday, July 15. If too many wish to participate we'll draw names and call everyone.

Continued on the next page

July Field Trips, continued

Wednesday, July 22

Filius Park and Mt. Evans

Leader: Lynn Willcockson, (303) 757-7000. Meet at 0730 at Filius Park. Go west on I-70 to Evergreen exit, then to Bergen Park exit. Turn right to Filius Park. Full day of birding. Bring lunch, water, clothes for all kinds of weather. Golden Eagle or day pass needed. Pipits and rosy finches will be "target" birds.

Saturday, July 25

Genesee Mountain Park

Leader: Karen Von Saltza, cell - (303) 941-4881. Meet at 0700 at Stegosaurus Park 'n' Ride (SE corner) at I-70 & Morrioso - Red Rocks turnoff. ½ day trip, lunch optional. Puzzling immatures should be seen. We'll visit a yard teeming with swallows, hummers, grosbeaks, siskins and more!

Sunday, July 26

Pine/Cheesman Reservoir Area

Leader: Chris Blakeslee, (303) 694-4670. Meet leader at 0650 just south of Conoco station at Dartmouth and S. Sheridan (across from old Bear Valley Shopping Ctr.) OR meet the group at 0730 at the Pine Junction Country Sotre on the west side of Hwy 285 at the stoplight. Bring lunch and water for a fun day chasing mountain birds of all kinds. Will see if we can find the Lewis's and Red-headed Woodpeckers which have nested near Cheesman the last few years.

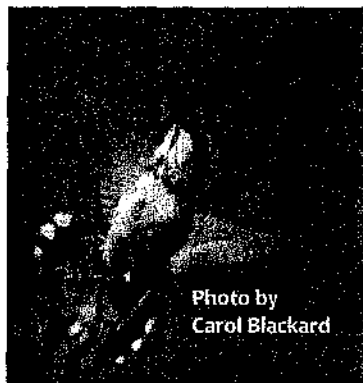


Photo by
Carol Blackard

Classes on Hummingbirds from Audubon

Hummingbirds of Colorado: Their Natural History and How to Attract Them

July 27, 6:30-9:00pm, at Audubon Society of Greater Denver, at the Nature Center
August 2, 6-8:30pm, at the home of Tina Jones
Instructor: Tina Jones

Colorado has had up to 11 species of Hummingbirds. Learn about the behaviors of Colorado's Hummingbirds, and learn about their natural history and life cycles.

Identification of the TRICKY immatures and females will be covered. Find out about the plants and their characteristics, which attract Hummingbirds.

This is a fee class offered through Audubon Society of Greater Denver. Call the Society at 303-973-9530, [Rhonda], to register and for more information.

Welcome New Members!

Linda Broeren 925 Galena St Aurora, CO 80010 303.366.7129
Marge Burgess 2905 Benton St Denver, CO 80214-8527 303.238.4055
Claire Montour 1675 S Wolcott Ct Denver, CO 80219-4357 303.934.5305

What's in a Name?

After a visit to south east Arizona, my curiosity was piqued by Botteri, Anna and Abert and how they came about having a sparrow, a hummer and a towhee named after them.

Well, Matteo Botteri, born in Yugoslavia in 1808 was a renowned ornithologist and collector. He lived in Mexico, founding a museum at Orizaba. In 1854 a lucky (or unlucky, depending on your viewpoint) sparrow whose lovely song ends with a bouncing ball effect was "collected" and named by Mr. Botteri.

In 1829 the Duchess of Rivoli, Princess Anna d'Essling was the inspiration for a hummingbird discovered by Rene Lesson, a French naturalist. He collected specimens for Anna's husband Prince Victor Massena. Lesson, a collector of hummingbirds named a certain blue throated hummingbird (another So.Ea.AZ bird) after his wife – Clemence (Lampornis clemenciae). A wise man to cover his bases by naming a bird after his boss's wife and his own wife!

James William Abert, born in 1820 was a Major in the US Army, an ornithologist and naturalist. During his 77 years, he joined expeditions and explored New Mexico, the Texas Panhandle and the Canadian Valley while continuing his natural sciences studies. He served in the Civil War and assigned to the US Army Corps of Engineers. His extensive journals documenting the geology, flora and fauna seen during his expeditions and war service went forgotten until 1941 when they were rediscovered and published. Abert also collected birds for Baird, including the towhee which Baird named after him in 1952.

Good birding to all,

Niña Routh

Audubon Alert:

Congress to Decide Fate of Critical Bill for Songbirds

Our most beloved songbirds are in trouble. More than 300 species of neotropical migratory birds, such as Western Tanagers, Wood Thrushes, and Bobolinks, travel thousands of miles between Latin America and the Caribbean to their northern breeding grounds. These birds are facing an increasingly complex range of threats—habitat loss, invasive species, avian diseases, and a changing climate.

We can help: The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program is an innovative, cost-effective approach to bird conservation, supporting projects to benefit bird populations and their habitats, research and monitoring, law enforcement, and outreach and education throughout Canada, the US, Latin America, and the Caribbean. But *right now, this program can only support a fraction of the projects in need of funding.*

Fostering International Cooperation

By their very nature, migratory species are a symbol of the need for international efforts in nature conservation. To safeguard the future for Neotropical migratory birds, protections must be in place at every stop along their migratory routes. The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act builds critical links between conservation efforts here in the U.S. and those of our conservation partners in Latin America and Canada.

Momentum is building in Congress to give a much-needed boost to this program, for more information, go to the Audubon web site:

<http://audubonaction.org/campaign/neotrops/8ig6enk4r7wb7eem?>

Spring Count Summary

A cloudy week before and cloudy days on count days (with some rain mixed into both) enabled the 30th Spring Count this year to break all sorts of records.

- The highest number of **species** – 183 (previous high, 172 last year) AND
- The highest number of individual **birds** – 28,469 (in 1989 we counted 26,325).

Five areas counted over 100 species, and most of the eight had record-high species counts

Thirty-three species established record high counts:

Second-highest number of swallows, 12,524 including 4,650 Violet-greens, 3,553 Trees, 328 N. Rough-wings (previous highs, 4633 in 2000, 5467 in 2008, and 354 in 1990)

Highest ever number of 1796 *Spizella* sparrows – 2335 (1115 in 2003): Chipping Sparrows (1084 in 2003), 116 Clay-colored and 166 Brewer's (87 and 54 in 1996)

33 Wood Ducks (26 in 2005)

245 Ruddy Ducks (156 in 1983)

169 Blue-winged Teal (89 in 1989)

103 Eared Grebes (previous high, 38 in 1983)

10 Bald Eagles (8 in 2002 and 1994)

14 Cooper's Hawks (12 last year)

11 Wild Turkeys (1-2 before)

203 Spotted Sandpipers (120 in 2003)

64 Willets (24 in 1999)

15 Marbled Godwits (never more than one before)

131 Franklin's Gulls (80 in 2000)

22 Least Flycatchers (11 in 2007)

17 Dusky Flycatchers (1-3 before)

22 White-breasted Nuthatches (14 in 2008)

557 House Wrens (459 in 1997)

102 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (56 last year)

93 Swainson's Thrushes (55 in 1993)

464 American Robins (389 in 1997)

696 European Starlings (588 in 2003)

33 Orange-crowned Warblers (23 in 1995)

15 Northern Waterthrushes (maybe the highest number ever counted in Colorado in one place in one day)

46 Yellow-breasted Chats (38 in 2007 and 2001)

59 Green-tailed towhees (53 in 1983)

167 Spotted Towhees (113 in 1984)

2 Field Sparrows (one, twice before)

411 Lark Sparrows (106 in 2003)

380 Lark Buntings (374 in 1996)

22 Lincoln's Sparrows (11 in 2003)

145 White-crowned Sparrows (70 in 1983)

This count reflects an extraordinary migration that eastern Colorado experienced this year. This presages, we hope, a successful breeding season because of the high moisture across the plains as well as close to the Front Range.

From Hugh Kingery

What birds to look for in July and where to look for them

DFO Birders,

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In July, the average high in Denver is 88 degrees and the average low is 64 degrees, up 7 and 12 degrees on the high and low from June, although it has reached 104 just as in June, and has fallen to 43. The state record high of 114 degrees occurred in July 1933 in Las Animas and in 1954 in Sedgwick. Major rainstorms in July can be deadly. Probably the most devastating storm in modern Colorado history occurred on July 31, 1976, when a stationary storm over Estes Park dropped 12 inches of rain causing the Big Thompson River to rise 10 feet and flood in only minutes, resulting in 139 deaths. The Big Thompson canyon was devastated. On July 28, 1997, a stalled thunderstorm inundated Ft. Collins with 13 inches of rain. The ensuing flood washed away a trailer park and killed five. Six inches of snow fell on Mt. Evans on July 4, 1995. July is an interesting and dangerous month for weather.

Speaking of Mt. Evans, July is a good time to look for Brown-capped Rosy-finches and American Pipits that nest on the tundra there. Also while on the tundra, either there, on Guanella or Loveland Pass, or above the Visitors Center on Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park, watch for White-tailed Ptarmigan in their mottled plumage leading chicks through the tundra grasses and flowers.

In Castlewood Canyon State Park near Franktown, southeast of Denver, watch and listen for Red-eyed Vireo that one local birder has recently seen and heard singing there. Ovenbird can be found nesting at higher elevation in Ponderosa Pine forest including this location. Just south of Castlewood, watch and listen for Dickcissel and Bobolink. The latter can also be found around Boulder County and it seems this year, Dickcissel is wide spread on the Colorado plains. Make sure to check the wires and shrubs near alfalfa fields while you listen for "dick, dick, ciss, ciss, ciss". Shorebirds will start returning from the Arctic in late July. Watch any mudflats you can find for these long distance migrants. Beebe Draw, the mudflats south of Lower Latham Reservoir discussed in earlier columns and Barr Lake, if the water level is down, are good places for shorebirds.

Hummingbirds were overwhelmingly the bird mentioned the most by my contributors for you to watch

for, especially along the front range. You should put out your hummingbird feeders by July 4 to catch these little guys on their southward migration. Rufous will start showing up first and Calliope will follow. If you see a hummer in the plains away from the foothills and mountains, check to see if it isn't a Black-chinned Hummingbird, which has been expanding its nesting range which isn't to say that they won't be seen along the front range foothills. Hummers of all 4 species, including the not yet mentioned Broad-tailed, can be found far from the foothills in fall migration. I've seen them at Lake Jackson in Morgan County during the summer migration.

Mid-July is the time that the hummers will increase in numbers. The adults will appear first followed by the immatures. Check any feeders that you see as many restaurants and hotels in the mountains maintain feeders. Also watch for any "big" hummers as post breeding wandering occurs and a big one, a Magnificent or Blue-throated, could pop anywhere.

Tina Jones of Littleton will allow birders to check out her hummer feeders from July 15th on. Individuals must call Tina at 303-794-2647 ahead of time to say when they will stop by. Tina's yard is closed for certain dates for garden tours and classes. Tina is teaching a class on "Hummingbird Behavior and Hummingbird Plantings" Details on Page 2.

Three-toed Woodpecker may be the easiest to find in July, when they are most active feeding their young. This bird is more commonly associated with Spruce and Lodgepole Pine, particularly if the trees are diseased. Lodgepole Pine trees which have been killed or weakened from the Pine Beetle can be a good indicator of this bird. Rocky Mountain National Park is a good viewing location, particularly Wild Basin. The campground at the base of Mt. Evans is one location where I have seen them and White Ranch Park in Jefferson County is another place to look. Also look in conifer forests which have been affected by forest fires.

Black Swifts can be easier to see in July when they also are feeding their young. Hanging Lake in Glenwood Canyon, Rifle Falls (Delorme - 34 C4), and Box Canyon in the town of Ouray, are good places to observe these birds.

By Ira Sanders

If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greatlarks@msu.com. All suggestions and contributions are gratefully accepted. Bill Schmoker, Karl Stecher, Nathan Pieplow, Bill Kaempfer, Glenn Walbek, and Tina Jones graciously contributed to this month's column.

Field Trip Summaries May 2009

May 2, Saturday*McCabe Meadow Park formerly Parker Regional Park (MCC)*

Leader(s): Steve Kennedy. **Observers:** Mary Burger, Dave Driscoll, Mary Driscoll, Deb Kennedy, Buzz Schaumberg. **Time:** 0730-1300. **Distance:** 4 miles by car, 6 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, ponds, marsh, plains, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Overcast, 38-48°F, northeast wind, 5-10mph. **Totals:** 65 species, 1344 individuals.

May 3, Sunday*Roxborough State Park (ROX)*

Leader(s): Alison Kondler. **Observers:** Jo Desrosiers, Mary Furman, Phyllis Geraghty, Jill Holden, Sue Majeski, Susan Maus, Mary Metzger, Ann Sarg, Cecilia Travis, 8 other people. **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, 45-58°F, southeast wind, 5mph. **Totals:** 35 species, 161 individuals.

May 15-17, Fri-Sun*Bonnie Reservoir (BON)*

Leader(s): Bob Righter. **Observers:** Kathy Bollhoeft, Jean Eddins, Jeff and Kathy Dunning, Dave Hill, Tim and Candice Johnson, Mary Keithler, Walt and Linda Knudson, Chuck Lowrie, Betsy Shaw, Harriet Stratton. **Time:** 0700-1700. **Distance:** 20 miles by car, 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Aquatic, riparian, prairie, elevation 3900'. **Weather:** 45-72°F, north wind, 0-18mph. **Totals:** 106 species, 1058 individuals.

May 16, Saturday*Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Jackie King. **Observers:** Jacques Cartier, Patty Echelmeyer, Laurie Gibb, Peggy Gonder, Nancy Osborn, Mary Zick. **Time:** 0800-1430. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Plains and riparian, elevation 5280'. **Weather:** Cloudy and overcast, clearing around noon, 43-60°F, southwest wind, 5-15mph. **Totals:** 44 species, 913 individuals.

Highlights: Very close looks at four little baby killdeer and their frantic parents. Not only were we birders too close for their comfort, there were two nasty snakes nearby the babies. There was also a fall out of Swainson thrush and lots of house wrens. We saw one house wren's nest hole and also the nest of a Swainson hawk. To add to the excitement of the day, there was a marathon going on to benefit the legal services for the poor. All in all, it was a great birding trip!

May 17, Sunday*Two Ponds & Rocky Flats NWRs (TWO)*

Leader(s): Dave Rhoades. **Observers:** Linda Broeren, Barbara Bronn, Karen Clark, Gene Davis, Jim Duggan, Derek Hankins, Peggy Hankins, Christie Honnen, Pauline Ide, Joe Lupfer, Pam Titles. **Time:** 0800-1300. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponds, grassland, woodlands, prairie, elevation 5500-6050'. **Weather:** Clear, calm, 50-80°F. **Totals:** 40 species, 161 individuals. **Highlights:** Sora and Virginia Rails

May 23-25, Sat-Mon*Crescent Lake Refuge, Nebraska (CRE) Cancelled***May 23, Saturday***Audubon Center at Chatfield (AUD)*

Leader(s): Doris Cruze. **Observers:** Justin Clay, Nelson Ford, Rita Ford, Terry Gurth, Merikay Haggerty, Kent Kreider, Liz Kreider, Deb Palenik, Sue Smith, Marleen Swalm, Diana Wilson. **Time:** 0800-1130. **Distance:** 2.5 miles on foot. **Weather:** Cloudy, overcast, 54-62°F. **Totals:** 46 species, 243 individuals.

Highlights: At the RMBO banding station, we saw yellow warblers, catbirds, dusky flycatcher, yellow-breasted chat, and western wood peewee in hand as they were weighed, measured, and banded.

May 24, Sunday*Rigli Ranch (RIG)*

Leader(s): Joe Rigli. **Observers:** Bryan and Kristin Arnold, Debra Bogar, Jean Bogar, Mike Bogar (Oregon), Bill Buttner, Ivan Getting, Clint Jones, Janet Kilbride, Liz and Kent Kreider, Tim Smart, Melissa Smith, Pamela Wickerd. **Time:** 0830-1500. **Distance:** 12 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian woodlands, creeks, fields, sandhill-sagebrush, ponds, short-grass prairie, elevation 4330'. **Weather:** Cool, cloudy, overcast, 61-79°F. **Totals:** 46 species, 174 individuals. (not all shown on Excel chart).

May 25, Monday*South Platte Trail and 88th (SOU)*

Leader(s): Jackie King. **Observers:** Frank Hatch, Nancy Hatch, Colleen Nunn. **Time:** 0730-1000. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, elevation 5280'. **Weather:** Very cool and cloudy, rain by 0900, 53-58°F, northwest wind, 3-5mph. **Totals:** 32 species, 462 individuals.

Highlights: Did not see very many birds. It was the day after the hail storm in Commerce City and the river was very high. I wonder if that caused the birds to be scarce? We got good looks at the birds we saw and of course, there were many nesting swallows which are always a treat. Since it was raining, the swallows were just over our heads all morning. Good trip but cool and damp!

Field Trip Summaries May 2009, continued

May 29, Friday *Willow Springs Open Space (W11)*

Leader(s): Mike Henwood. **Observers:** Carol and Clinton Flynn, Derek and Peggy Hankin, Nancy Hawkins, Bob Montgomery. **Time:** 0700-1500. **Distance:** 2 miles by car, 5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Montane shrub, Gambel's oak, Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir, elevation 6400-7400'. **Weather:** Sunny to partly cloudy, mostly clear, 50-75°F. **Totals:** 43 species, 169 individuals.

May 30, Saturday *Willow Springs Open Space (W12)*

Leader(s): Mike Henwood. **Observers:** Walter and Linda Knudsen, Jeannie Mitchell, Nina Routh, Bob Shade, Paul Slingsby. **Time:** 0730-1500. **Distance:** 5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Montane shrub, Gambel's oak, Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir, elevation 6400-7400'. **Weather:** Sunny in morning, partly cloudy in afternoon, 50-70°F. **Totals:** 47 species, 247 individuals.

May 31, Sunday *Willow Springs Open Space (W13)*

Leader(s): Mike Henwood. **Observers:** Bill Eden, Mackenzie Goldthwait, Doug Kibbe, Hugh and Urling Kingery, Harriet Stratton, Karen von Saltza. **Time:** 0730-1515. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Montane shrub, Gambel's oak, Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir, elevation 6400-7400'. **Weather:** Sunny in morning, partly cloudy in afternoon, 60-75°F. **Totals:** 46 species, 291 individuals.

May 31, Sunday *Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)*

Leader(s): Patty Echelmeyer. **Observers:** Carla Blair, Debra Bogar, Jean Bogar, Susan Crisfield, Jean Davis, Paul Denholm, Fred Hager, Merikay Haggerty, Monna Krebs, Jeannie Mitchell, Don Mullineaux, Kathleen Otterman, Toni Rautus, Tobi Reetz, Betsy Shaw, Greg Smith, Barbara Thomas. **Time:** 0800-1100. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponds, riparian, cottonwood, urban park, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Clear, 50-75°F. **Totals:** 38 species, 333 individuals.

Highlights: Female wood duck and four ducklings on log in pond, male Cooper's Hawk brought a mouse to female, which ate it and fed to young on nest.

Tuesday Birders

May 5 *Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (PRO)*

Leader(s): Else van Erp and Dave Hill. **Observers:** 46 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lowland riparian, cottonwood, ponds, willow, cattails, lakes, urban park, elevation 5386'. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, 56-68°F, west wind, 0-10mph. **Totals:** 52 species, 568 individuals.

May 12 *Old Stone House, Bear Creek Greenbelt (OLD)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 31 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 2.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, meadows, elevation 5300'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 53-83°F, southwest wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 38 species, 313 individuals.

May 19 *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Kathy Boelhofer and Dave Hill. **Observers:** 27-36 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 2.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, prairie, reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, willow, cattails, agriculture, elevation 5100-5300'. **Weather:** Sunny, calm, 70-88°F, no wind. **Totals:** 55 species, 578 individuals.

May 25 *Lair O' the Bear (LAI)*

Leader(s): Mary Keithler. **Observers:** 10. **Time:** 0830-1130. **Distance:** 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, some ponderosa pine and blue spruce, elevation 6350'. **Weather:** Cloudy, rainy, 48-51°F, calm. **Totals:** 25 species, 97 individuals.

May 25 *Idaho Springs Breeding Bird Atlas II (IDA)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 10. **Time:** 0800-1300. **Distance:** 15 miles by car with many stops for observing out of vehicles. **Habitat:** Riparian, willows, hay meadows, ponderosa pine, Colorado spruce, Douglas fir, aspen, elevation 8200'. **Weather:** Light drizzle most of the time period with heavy overcast, 41-48°F, little to no wind. **Totals:** 35 species, 142 individuals.

For those of you interested in seeing the specifics, the excel spreadsheet can be downloaded from www.dfobirders.org

Cornell's Funky Nest Challenge!



Dear Birding Friend,

You find them in hanging flower baskets...an old boot...a garage sheif...or under a bridge...birds build nests in the strangest places! That's the theme for the newest environmental challenge from our Celebrate Urban Birds project: **Funky Nests in Funky Places!** As you may know, Celebrate Urban Birds is a free, year-round citizen-science project from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, focused on birds in neighborhood settings.

For the Funky Nests in Funky Places challenge, we want you to take photos, do a painting, write a story, or shoot a video showing a bird's nest built in some out-of-the-way or out-of-this-world place. When observing nests please be sure to avoid touching them or disturbing the birds.

This one's going to be fun, I think. We usually receive hundreds of entries for each of our challenges, and I can't wait to see what you sent us this time and where birds have chosen to build their funky nests! I'm also attaching a PDF flier about the challenge you can print for yourself or pass along to others who might want to participate.

We have some great prizes, including a Leica C-LUX 3 compact camera, bird feeders, shrubs for planting, and more. The first 50 entrants will receive a copy of the "Doves and Pigeons" poster by Julie Zickefoose and we'll post selected images and videos on the Celebrate Urban Birds website.

Here's how to enter:

1. Email your entry to urbanbirds@cornell.edu. Links are acceptable for videos.
2. Write "Funky Nests" in the subject line.
3. Include your name and mailing address.
4. Explain **why** you submitted your entry--what's the story behind it?
5. One entry per person, please.

Deadline for entries is July 31, 2009.

Visit the Celebrate Urban Birds website for more information and to read the terms of agreement regarding all entries. Thanks for taking the challenge!

Karen Purcell, Project Leader, (607) 254-2455, urbanbirds@cornell.edu

If the typeface in Additional Reports on the next page is too small, email veronicaholt@Q.com for the original file. We ran out of space, prolific birders!

May Additional Reports

Species	Date	Number	Location	County	Observer(s) & comments
Little Blue Heron	5/12	1	Founders Parkway, Castle Rock	Douglas	Ueling Kinyery
Tri-colored Heron	5/15	1	Little Jumbo Reservoir	Logan	Glenn Walbek, Joey Kallner, Loch Kilpatrick
Broad-winged Hawk	5/1	1 imm	private ranch	Lincoln	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Short-eared Owl	5/1	1	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
ACADIAN FLYCATCHER	5/12	1 post, 1st stage record	Bent Road Jct & 17.5	Bert	B Percival, J Kallner, Joe Roller, M Peterson, N Erthal, A Spencer, P Differding
Brown Thrasher	5/13, 5/106	1 m ad	Audubon Nature Center	Douglas	Doris Cruise, Ueling Kinyery
Curve-billed Thrasher	5/15	1	private ranch	Lincoln	Glenn Walbek, Joey Kallner, Loch Kilpatrick
Curve-billed Thrasher	5/8	1	private ranch	Prowers	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner, Norm Erthal, Joe Roller, Glenn Walbek
Black Phoebe	5/14	2	Valco Pond		Allen Hagood, Polleke Siraa
White-eyed Vireo	4/26	1	backyard 10826 E Maplewood Pl.	Arapahoe	Mary Kay Burger
White-eyed Vireo	5/3	1	Fairmount Cemetery	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
White-eyed Vireo	5/19	1	Franktown	Douglas	H2U - seen & heard
White-eyed Vireo	5/24	1 banded	Audubon Nature Center, Chatfield	Jefferson	Maradeth McBurney
Yellow-throated Vireo	5/1	1	private ranch	Cheyenne	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Yellow-throated Vireo	5/13-5/108	1	Two Buttes Reservoir	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Yellow-throated Vireo	5/2	1	Lamar Community College	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Veery	5/8	1	Nee Noshie Res. Locust Grove	Kiowa	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner
Wood Thrush	5/1	1	Temple Ranch	Bert	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Nashville Warbler	5/1	1	Lamar Community College	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Nashville Warbler	5/2	1	Fort Lyon Wildlife Easement	Bert	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Northern Parula	5/2	2	Two Buttes Reservoir	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Northern Parula	5/2	1	Near Birchfield SWA	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Northern Parula	5/3	1	Aaron Golf Course park	Morgan	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Magnolia Warbler	5/15	1 m	private ranch	Lincoln	Glenn Walbek, Joey Kallner, Loch Kilpatrick
Townsend's Warbler	5/1	1	private ranch	Cheyenne	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Black-throated Gray Warbler	5/8	1 f	Nee Noshie Res. Locust Grove	Kiowa	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner
Grace's Warbler	5/7	1 ad, singing	Matthews-Reaser Bird Sanctuary	Lamar	Gary Matthews, Kathy Mimm Dunning, MGB
Pine Warbler	5/2	1 m singing	Fairmount Cemetery	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Blackpoll Warbler	5/1	1 m	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Blackpoll Warbler	5/8	1 m	Two Buttes Reservoir	Baca	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner, Norm Erthal, Joe Roller, Glenn Walbek
Blackpoll Warbler	5/8	3 m	private ranch	Lincoln	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner
Blackpoll Warbler	5/15	1 m	woodlot at CR57/CR100	Weld	Kathy Mimm Dunning
Black-and-white Warbler	5/2	1 f	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Black-and-white Warbler	5/1	1 f	Lamar Community College	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Black-and-white Warbler	5/2	1 m	Birchfield SWA	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Black-and-white Warbler	5/3	3 m	Two Buttes Reservoir		Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Black-and-white Warbler	5/3	1 m	Fairmount Cemetery	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Prothonotary Warbler	5/1	2 m	private ranch	Lincoln	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Worm-eating Warbler	5/1	1	Temple Ranch	Bert	Quane Nelson, Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Northern Waterthrush	5/2	1	Lamar Community College	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Northern Waterthrush	5/3	1	Two Buttes Reservoir	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Northern Waterthrush	5/15	1	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Glenn Walbek, Joey Kallner, Loch Kilpatrick
Northern Waterthrush	5/8	1	Two Buttes Reservoir	Baca	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner, Norm Erthal, Joe Roller, Glenn Walbek
Northern Waterthrush	5/8	1	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner
Northern Waterthrush	5/11	1	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Allen Hagood, Polleke Siraa
Hooded Warbler	5/1	1 m	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/1	1 m	private ranch	Lincoln	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/1	1 f	private ranch	Lincoln	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/1	1 m	private ranch	Cheyenne	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/1	2 m	Temple Ranch	Bert	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/1	1 f	Lamar Community College	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/2	1 f	Fort Lyon Wildlife Easement	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/2	1 m	Birchfield SWA	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hooded Warbler	5/108, 5/110	1 f	Crow Valley C/G	Weld	Kathy Mimm Dunning, Jeff Dunning, MGB
Swamp Sparrow	5/1	1	Lamar Community College	Prowers	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Swamp Sparrow	5/3	1	Two Buttes Reservoir	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Morris's Sparrow	5/2	1 alt. plumage	Turk's Pond	Baca	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Hepatic Tanager	5/11	1	Elbert	Elbert	Mona Reed
Scarlet Tanager	5/28	1 ad. m	Gregory Canyon	Boulder	Kathy Mimm Dunning
Summer Tanager	5/1	1 m alt. plumage	private ranch	Lincoln	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Summer Tanager	5/15	1 m molting	private ranch	Lincoln	Glenn Walbek, Joey Kallner, Loch Kilpatrick
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/1	1 m	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/15	1 f	private ranch	Lincoln	Glenn Walbek, Joey Kallner, Loch Kilpatrick
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/8	1 f	Two Buttes Reservoir	Baca	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner, Norm Erthal, Joe Roller, Glenn Walbek
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/10	1 m	Bonnie Reservoir	Yuma	Polleke Siraa
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/13	1	Perry Park	Douglas	Kay Chambers
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/8	1	Englewood	Arapahoe	Misti Blanchard
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/17	1	Beaver Creek Lake Park	Jefferson	Mike Herwood
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/23	1	Park Hill	Denver	Peggy Roberts
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/24	1	Cherry Hills	Arapahoe	Jim Nelson (MD)
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5/25	1	Welchester Park	Jefferson	Mark Chavez
Indigo Bunting	5/7	1 m	Cottonwood Canyon	Baca	Allen Hagood, Polleke Siraa
Indigo Bunting	5/17	1 m	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Connie & Rick Steinkamp
White-throated Sparrow	5/1	1	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
White-throated Sparrow	5/14	8	Crow Valley C/G	Weld	Kathy Mimm Dunning
Field Sparrow	5/1	1	private ranch	Cheyenne	Joey Kallner, Many Obs
Field Sparrow	5/8	1	Nee Noshie Res. Locust Grove	Kiowa	Steve Stachowiak, Ric Olson, Joey Kallner

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE JULY 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS										TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL	Totals DFO
	3-5	11	12	18	18	19	22	25	28		7	14	21	28		
	NOR	QUI	OFA	CHE	GOL	BRA	FL	GEN	PN		STA	PN	SQU	MTE		
Pied-billed Grebe	20														20	20
Eared Grebe	115														115	115
Western Grebe	35			4											39	39
American White Pelican	30			18											48	48
Double-crested Cormorant	22	5		8					6						41	41
Great Blue Heron	1			2					1						4	4
Snowy Egret	6	1		5											12	12
Black-crowned Night-Heron	5		1	2											8	8
Turkey Vulture	10				2		5		1		1		1	2	22	18
Canada Goose	30	21	4	40					30			1			126	125
Gadwall	10														10	10
American Wigeon	40														40	40
Mallard	26	3	3	22		8	11		11		7	3	8		102	84
Blue-winged Teal	6														6	6
Cinnamon Teal	4														4	4
Northern Shoveler	4														4	4
Northern Pintail	10														10	10
Green-winged Teal	8														8	8
Canvasback	10														10	10
Redhead	20														20	20
Ring-necked Duck	15														15	15
Lesser Scaup	5					2									7	7
Common Merganser	1								16			5			22	17
Ruddy Duck	20														20	20
Bald Eagle	5								1						6	6
Northern Harrier	3														3	3
Cooper's Hawk								1					1		2	1
Swainson's Hawk	10	1		2											13	13
Red-tailed Hawk	10			1			3		1		1		3		19	15
western races				1											(1)	1
Rough-legged Hawk															0	0
Golden Eagle	2														2	2
American Kestrel	8														8	8
Falcon sp.				1											1	1
Greater Sage-Grouse	3														3	3
Sora	3														3	3
American Coot	25			6											31	31
Killdeer	10	3		9											22	22
American Avocet	20														20	20
Lesser Yellowlegs	5														5	5
Willet	6								1						6	6
Spotted Sandpiper	2	1		2					1			1			7	6
Marbled Godwit	1														1	1
Long-billed Dowitcher															0	0
Wilson's Snipe	8														8	8
Wilson's Phalarope	10														10	10
Red-necked Phalarope															0	0
Ring-billed Gull				2											2	2
California Gull	100														100	100
Ivory Gull															0	0
Forster's Tern	2														2	2
Black Tern	2														2	2
Rock Pigeon	3	2	4										2	5	16	9
Band-tailed Pigeon							8								8	8
Eurasian Collared-dove	1								5						6	6
Mourning Dove	10	7	3	43			2		4		1	1			71	69
Great Horned Owl	1														1	1
Common Nighthawk	5														6	5
White-throated Swift			2												2	2
Black-chinned Hummingbird				4				3							7	7
Calliope Hummingbird						1	1								2	2
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	30		7	4	15	100	11	17	6		28	16	9	8	261	190
Rufous Hummingbird	1					10	4	2	1		1				19	18
Belted Kingfisher		3	1						1			1			6	5
Williamson's Sapsucker					1	1					5				7	2
Red-naped Sapsucker	1				1								3		5	2

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE JULY 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS										TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL	Totals DFO
	3-5 NOR	11 QUI	12 OFA	18 CHE	18 GOL	19 BRA	22 FIL	25 GEN	26 PIN	7 STA	14 PIN	21 SQU	28 MTE			
Downy Woodpecker	1	4	1		2				3		1			12	11	
Hairy Woodpecker	1		1		1		1	1		1	1		1	8	6	
Northern Flicker	3	2	2	4	2	2	4	5	3	3	2	3	3	30	27	
"Red-shafted" race			(2)	(4)	(2)		(4)	(5)	(3)					(20)	20	
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1												2	3	1	
Western Wood-Pewee	4		4	3	1		3		3	2	4		3	27	18	
Willow Flycatcher	1													1	1	
Herrnond's Flycatcher			3											3	3	
Dusky Flycatcher					2								1	3	2	
Cordilleran Flycatcher			8		8		3	3	5	1	1	3		33	28	
Buff-breasted Flycatcher														0	0	
Empidonax sp.	1								4					6	5	
Say's Phoebe				1										1	1	
Western Kingbird		5		9										17	17	
Eastern Kingbird				1										1	1	
Plumbeous Vireo			3		1		1			1				6	5	
Warbling Vireo	1		5		8									14	14	
Gray Jay	1					3								4	4	
Steller's Jay	1				6	3	4	3	1	1		1	2	22	18	
Blue Jay		4												4	4	
Clerk's Nutcracker						4	1							5	5	
Black-billed Magpie	13			5	3		3	11	1	2				38	36	
American Crow	10		4	1		2	6	5	3	3	6	3	6	48	31	
Common Raven			2			5	1	1	2		2	1	2	16	11	
Horned Lark	5													5	5	
Tree Swallow	11		2		12		1	1	1			2	7	37	28	
Violet-green Swallow	10		5			15	6	7	12	8	12	2	6	83	55	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow		3	1				3		1					8	8	
Cliff Swallow	100			54			1		45		5			206	200	
Barn Swallow	2	3		3	3		2		4		2			19	17	
Black-capped Chickadee		5	2	2	15	1		2		1		2		30	27	
Mountain Chickadee	1		9			10	11	9	22	5	3	4	6	79	62	
Red-breasted Nuthatch			2		1	3			30			2	1	39	36	
White-breasted Nuthatch			4		2		2	9		1	1	1	2	22	17	
Pygmy Nuthatch			12		2		12	20	6	4			4	60	52	
Brown Creeper			5						1					6	6	
Rock Wren	1													1	1	
House Wren	1		6	17	12	2	3	2	2	8	3		6	62	45	
Marsh Wren	1			1										2	2	
American Dipper						6					2		1	9	6	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2		6		1	20	2		8	1	1	1	1	42	38	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			1											1	1	
Western Bluebird			8				9	19	1	2				39	37	
Mountain Bluebird	5				6				1					12	12	
Townsend's Solitaire					1		2		1			2		6	4	
Veery						2								2	2	
Swainson's Thrush						3								3	3	
Hermi Thrush			3			12	1			1		3		20	16	
American Robin	20	13	5	9	6	20	8		12	5	13	6	12	129	93	
Gray Catbird	1		1	2					4		4			12	8	
Northern Mockingbird											1			1	0	
Sage Thrasher	10													10	10	
European Starling		8	7	3								1		19	18	
American Pipit	1													1	1	
Cedar Waxwing									8		11			19	8	
Orange-crowned Warbler						1								1	1	
Yellow Warbler	20		5	4	1				2		5			37	32	
Yellow-rumped Warbler						10	2	1	3		1		1	18	16	
"Audubon's" race						10		1						(11)	11	
MacGillivray's Warbler	1				2									3	3	
Common Yellowthroat				3										3	3	
Wilson's Warbler	1					25	4					1		31	30	
Yellow-breasted Chat				1										1	1	
Western Tanager	1				1		3	1	1	2				9	7	
Green-tailed Towhee					1						1			2	1	
Spotted Towhee			2											2	2	
Chipping Sparrow			6			3	3	5		8		4		30	17	

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE JULY 2009

SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS									TUESDAY BIRDERS					
DATE	3-5	11	12	18	18	19	22	25	28	7	14	21	28	TOTAL	Totals DFO
LOCATION	NOR	QUI	OFA	CHE	GOL	BRA	FIL	GEN	PN	STA	PIN	SQU	MTE		
Brewer's Sparrow	6													6	6
Vesper Sparrow	1													1	1
Lark Sparrow											1			1	0
Savannah Sparrow	23													23	23
Fox Sparrow					1									1	1
"State-colored" race					1									(1)	1
Song Sparrow	14		3	4	4				1		4		1	31	26
Lincoln's Sparrow	5				4	30	6		1			1		48	45
White-crowned Sparrow	10					26	8					7		50	43
Dark-eyed Junco			4		1	40	2	4	3	3	1	5	8	71	54
"Gray-headed" race			4		1	40	2	4		3			8	(62)	51
Black-headed Grosbeak			3		1		3	3	3	3	1			17	13
Lazuli Bunting			2											2	2
Red-winged Blackbird	20	3		33					12		6			74	68
Western Meadowlark	2	2		1										5	5
Yellow-headed Blackbird	30													30	30
Brewer's Blackbird	6			10										16	16
Common Grackle	10	18	3		2									33	33
Brown-headed Cowbird	30		8	10	2					13	1		1	65	50
Bullock's Oriole			2	2										4	4
Pine Grosbeak						4	3							7	7
Cassin's Finch	6		4		1				2			3		16	13
House Finch	1	12		8	2		4	6		7		1		41	33
Red Crossbill					2	25	13	43	27	14	4	1	3	132	110
Pine Siskin	5		8		1	2	21	30	6	17	3	8	3	104	73
Lesser Goldfinch		2	12			1	1	9	1		2			28	26
American Goldfinch	1	2	2	24							1			30	29
Evening Grosbeak					1									1	1
House Sparrow	3	17					4							24	24
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	1144	153	200	390	141	401	211	223	333	155	138	83	111	3,883	3,188
TOTAL SPECIES	100	26	49	44	41	34	48	28	52	32	38	29	31	150	148
OBSERVATION LEGEND:	a=adult, i=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only, c=calling, s=singing, boldface=rare, unusual, * =also in addition to, x=individual date incomplete/not enumerated														

OBSERVATION LEGEND:

a=adult, i=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only,
 c=calling, s=singing, boldface=rare/unusual, + =also in addition to,
 x=individual date incomplete/not enumerated

North Park - Joint Trip with BBC (NOR)

Quincy Reservoir (QUI)

O'Fallon and Lair O' the Bear Parks (OFA)

Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)

Golden Gate Canyon State Park (GOL)

Brainard Lake, cabin in Peaceful Valley (BRA)

Filius Park, Echo Lake, Empire (FIL)

Genesee Park and two local homes' feeders (GEN)

Pine/Cheesman Reservoir Area (PIN)

Stapleton Park, Selby's Feeder, Genesee Mountain Park (STA)

Pine Valley Ranch Jeffco Open Space Park (JEF)

Squaw Pass and Echo Lake (SQU)

Mt Evans Wildlife Area (MTE)



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

August 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44, Number 8

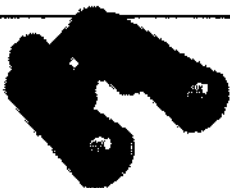
The Denver Field Ornithologists' monthly feature meetings resume this month on August 24, and who better to launch the new season but mega-birder John Drummond!

A visit to Bolivia: It's a thrilling account of 12 days and 429 species, "despite civil unrest, road blockages and cancelled returning flights from La Paz, we successfully covered Bolivia's topographic diversity and great variety of habitats."

DFO member John Drummond will talk about his amazing Bolivia trip on August 24, 2009. John will bring many pictures, including more of the endangered Red-fronted Macaw shown above. John and the birders recorded numerous regional endemics shared with Southern Peru such as Hooded Mountain-Toucan, Light-crowned Spinetail, Diademed Tapaculo (ext), Golden-collared Tanager (ext), and Orange-browed Hemispingus. Others shared with northwest Argentina included Blue-capped Puffleg, Rufous-bellied Saltator, and Citron-headed Yellow-Finch. Twelve or



Continued on page 3



August Field Trips

Saturday, August 1 *Dawson Butte Ranch Open Space*

Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072. Meet leader at 0700 at the McDonald's at Castle Rock. It is on the west side of I-25 just as you come into Castle Rock. Bring sunscreen, water and insect repellent for a half day trip. You will be hiking on some of the five miles of newly opened trail in this new 828 acre property located near Tomah Road. This is part of Doris's Christmas Bird Count territory and promises exciting adventures.

Sunday, August 2 *Rocky Mountain National Park*

Leader: Ed Holub, 303-979-2194. Meet leader at 8:00 at the Nature Center, east of Beaver Meadows entrance on US 36. This will be an all day trip so bring lunch and extra water. Trip will probably finish about 3:15 or 3:30. The entrance fee is \$20 per car so carpooling is encouraged.

Saturday, August 8 *Belmar Historic Park*

Leader: Karleen Schofield, 303-936-8661. Meet leader at 0730 at the Belmar Historic Park, 800 South Wadsworth Blvd at West Ohio Ave. Turn west on Ohio Ave. and go two blocks straight ahead into Irongate parking lot and to the lake. Trip will end before noon so lunch is optional. This trip will be an easy hike on wheelchair accessible

August Field Trips, continued

trails. Bring binoculars and field guide. Trip participants should get good looks at snowy egrets and Cooper's hawks. This is a good trip for novice birders and new members.

Sunday, August 9 *Lower Latham, Loloff, and Barr Lake State Park*

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Saunders, 303-278-7172. Meet leaders at 0700 at the Division of Wildlife, 6060 No. Broadway – Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right. This will be a half day trip, State Parks pass will be needed for Barr Lake but lunch is optional.

Saturday, August 15 *Cherry Creek State Park*

Leader: Mary Cay Burger 303-771-3431. Meet leader at 7:30 at the West Gate. State Parks Pass required. This will be a half day trip; bring extra water but lunch is optional

Sunday, August 16 *Gregory Canyon*

Leader: Peggy Gonder, 303-321-3465. Meet leader at 07:30 on Flagstaff Mountain-bring \$3 in cash to pay for parking. As this is a half day trip, lunch is optional but bring lots of drinking water and good hiking shoes for a moderate hike which will be looking for scarlet tanager, warblers and buntings. Call the leader for more detailed directions and to register for the trip.

Saturday, August 22 *Parker Regional Park and Castlewood Canyon*

Leader: Sue Shulman, 303-773-3540. Meet leader at 07:00 at the Nature Center at Parker Regional Park. From Main St. intersection in Parker, go south on Parker Rd. (CO 83) for 1.2 miles. Turn right on Indian Pipe Lane to parking lot on right. Bring lunch and plenty of drinking water. After looking for fall migrants, group will go to Castlewood Canyon to check out what is there. Let's see if this year will be as good as or better than last year's migration!

Sunday, August 23 *Rigli Ranch*

Leader: Joe Rigli, 970-768-7121. Meet leader at ranch by 0830. From Hudson, go east on CO 52 until it turns north. Don't turn north, but continue east on Morgan County road F to CR 14, then turn north for approximately one mile to first house on left by boxcars. Bring lunch and extra water.

Saturday, August 29 *Wheat Ridge Green Belt*

Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. Meet at 7:30 at Prospect Park Lake near the permanent restrooms, south of West 44th Ave. just east of Robb St. This is an excellent area to see warblers as well as shore and water birds. This will be a half day trip so bringing lunch is optional. Leader is using a scooter for mobility so this trip is accessible and will involve easy walking only. This is a good trip for novice birders and new members. Call leader if going.

Sunday, August 30 *Northeastern Colorado, Prewitt and Jackson Reservoirs*

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748. Meet leader at 0530 at the Division of Wildlife, 6060 No. Broadway – Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right. Habitat Stamp for State Wildlife Areas and State Parks Pass required. This is an all day trip so bring lunch and plenty of water. Be sure to bring insect repellent and sunscreen. Call leader if going.

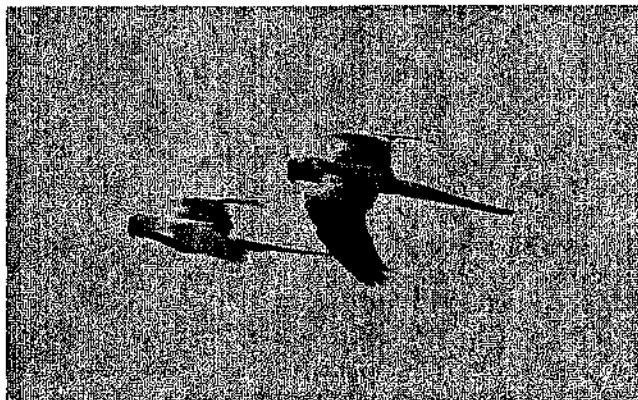
Welcome New Members!

Michael Kiessing, 9107 S. Deer Creek Canyon Rd, Littleton, Co 80127
Karen & John Weslar, 265 Jackson St, Denver, Co 80206 303.377.6299

Bolivia, continued

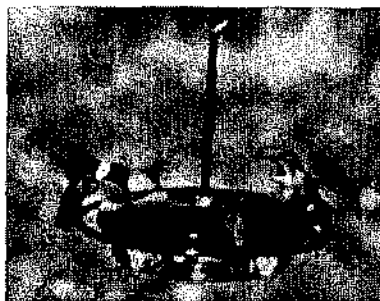
thirteen endemics were seen including marvelous views of the endangered Red-fronted Macaw, (seen on the right) Black-hooded Sunbeam, Cochabamba Mountain-Finch and the Rufous-faced Antpitta (ext). Other favorites during the main trip included Greater Rhea, Andean Condor, Cliff Parakeet, Yungas Pygmy Owl, Cream-backed Woodpecker, and Giant Conebill.

The lucky four birders on the extension trip managed to add Short-winged Grebe, Scimitar-winged Piha (one of the rarest birds in South America), Chestnut-crowned Cotinga, Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, and Berlepsch's Canastero.



Mark your calendars for this Bolivian experience. The presentation starts promptly at 7.30pm

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month August to April (but excluding December. All DFO meetings are interesting and the company of bird watchers is always worthwhile to keep. **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00pm AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30pm**. Plan to arrive by 7:15pm on these dates. Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium in Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7pm and 7:30pm. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.*



Hummingbird Viewing Opportunities

For Hummingbird viewing during the MORNING [until 10am], at the house of Tina Jones, 4400 Bow Mar Dr., Littleton, CO. There is no evening viewing for 2009, because of classes.

Please sign the register [which is in the outdoor patio]. Sit quietly in front, or backyard chairs. Do not move or walk around the yard. **INDIVIDUALS NEED** to call Tina Jones [303-794-2647] ahead of time to let her know what day you may come to the yard. **PLEASE** leave your name and phone number on Tina's phone machine. You do not need to wait for a return message. Tina will call you back if there is an issue. If morning viewing does not work out for you, please make this known in your message, and Tina will try to make other times work for an individual.

SEE DFO WEB site for directions and for possible changes. Thank you, Tina Jones!

What birds to look for in August and where to look for them

DFO Birders,

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In August, the average high in Denver is 86 degrees and the average low is 57 degrees, down 2 and 7 degrees on the high and low from July, although it has reached 101 and has fallen to 41. Although it won't feel like it, August is just a little cooler than July. Severe weather is still a threat in August as thunderstorms persist everywhere in the state including on Long's Peak, where in 1984, a tornado touched down at 11,400 feet. This was most likely the highest elevation tornado in US history.

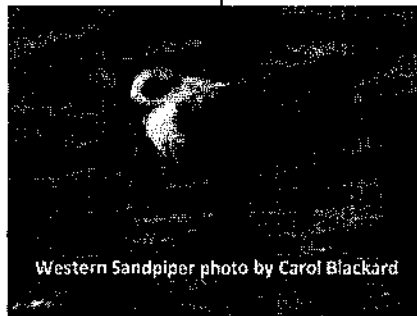
August is great time for Black Swifts at Ouzel Falls in Rocky Mt National Park and the west side of Wolf Creek Pass. You may see the swifts from the overlook or at the falls area at the base of the pass.

Mid to late-August start looking for fall warblers. You don't have to contend with the large flocks of Yellow-rumped Warblers yet so you don't have to pick through many birds in a big flock. Barr Lake State Park is a good migrant trap in the fall. In 2006 and 2007, the area around the banding station was one spot in the state where Canada Warbler was found. Keep your eyes open for this skulking rarity if you visit the banding station, just a short walk east of the Nature Center footbridge. RMBO does the banding and you can get bird in the hand looks at many species. Go early as the banding is usually done by 11 a.m. Barr Lake can also be a great place for migrating shorebirds if the water is low enough. Buff-breasted Sandpiper seems to show up every year here if the conditions are right. Late August through mid-September is the time to look for Buff-breasted Sandpipers. Beware of the buffy-looking Baird's Sandpipers. Read up on these two before heading into the field, as well as how to separate Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers. Crow Valley Campground on the Pawnee National Grasslands near Briggsdale is another very good migrant trap. If you go to Prewitt Reservoir for shorebirds, check out the inlet canal area at the west end of the reservoir for passerines. This is another spot where Canada Warbler was found just a couple of years ago.

Shorebirds can be found in the Lower Latham Reservoir area including Beebe Draw to the south of Lower

Latham. Prewitt Reservoir and Jackson Lake State Park can both be good for up to 20 – 25 species of shorebird. In the past, several hundred Mountain Plover have been seen gathering for migration in mid August at the north side of Jackson Lake. Though you won't need a scope for the Mountain Plover, bring a scope for the mudflats or all you'll see are the large shorebirds. As noted above, your success with shorebirds will be dependent on the water levels in the lakes and reservoirs.

During the drought, shorebirding was very good, but if the mudflats aren't there, your chances of getting lots of shorebirds is slim. Another place that seems to always draw shorebirds is John Martin Reservoir 25 miles west of Lamar. The size of the reservoir seems to guarantee mudflats and shorebirds. Bonny State Park north of Burlington can also be very good. Where ever you may try, watch for White-rumped Sandpipers and remember that American Golden Plovers, Upland Sandpipers and Long-billed Curlews aren't always in the mud but can be seen in short grass prairie.



Western Sandpiper photo by Carol Blackard

The first week of August seems to be the high point of hummingbird migration on the Front Range. Broad-tailed, Black-chinned, Rufous and Calliope can all be found at feeders in the foothills and the nearby

flatlands. You will also notice that by early August the Bullock's Orioles will be mostly gone. They leave for the Southwest before departing for Central America for the winter. Also gone by the end of August are the Black-headed Grosbeaks and almost all the hummingbirds.

Clay-colored, Brewer's and Chipping sparrows are passing through in large numbers by mid to late August. Watch out for those juvenile "chippies" as they can be confusing but young Clay-colored Sparrows are easier to ID in their immature plumage.

August offers the best opportunity to find White-tailed Ptarmigan because the young tend to be much more obvious. The Trail Ridge Road visitor's center and Guanella Pass can be good areas to try for these hard to find birds. Dusky Grouse are also most easily found at this time of year for the same reason. Mount Falcon open space in Jefferson County can be a good place to try for these guys.

I would like to thank Joey Kellner, Norm Lewis, Bill Kaempfer, Kari Stecher, Rick and Connie Steinkamp and Nathan Pieplow for their contributions to this month's column.

By Ira Sanders

If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greatauk@msn.com.

June Field Trip Summaries

June 6, Saturday *Poudre River, Fort Collins (POU)*

Leader(s): Dave Leatherman. **Observers:** Sue Schulman, Tim Smart, Nina Routh, Toni Rautus, Jenifer and Gary Cline, Becca Reid, Meredith Anderson, Neil Montague, Ann Del Zell, Tina Jones, Kris Koff. **Time:** 0730-1400. **Distance:** 4 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, wetland, elevation 5000'. **Weather:** Cool, mostly overcast in am, warm, mostly sunny in pm, 48-74°F. **Totals:** 58 species, 561 individuals. **Highlights:** Green Heron, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Grosbeak, Orchard Oriole, Peregrine Falcon

June 7, Sunday *Beaver Brook Trail (BEA)*

Leader(s): Paul Slingsby. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Jean Davis, Tim Smart, Betsy Rumky, Lisa Gotlin, Cris Cook. **Time:** 0700. **Distance:** 2 miles by car, 3+ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, coniferous and deciduous. **Weather:** Sunny am, sprinkles pm, 60°F. **Totals:** 38 species, 192 individuals.

Highlights: What 5" of rain in two weeks will do! The forest was beautiful, birds were plentiful. The group had five bridgeless crossings and a return via narrow rocky cliff passages. It was definitely 'Adventure Birding'! Birds were gathering nesting material or chasing and courting.

June 13, Saturday *Bailey Nesting Area, Summit County (BAI)*

Leader(s): Norm Lewis. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Diane Carter, Cris Cook, Derek and Peggy Hankins, Debbie Lewis, George and Bobbie Lohr, Chuck Lowrie, Bob and Nancy Montgomery, Tim Smart. **Distance:** 20 miles by car, 3 miles on foot. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, mild, 50-70°F. **Totals:** 40 species, 181 individuals.

June 14, Sunday *Lyons Area (LYO)*

Leader(s): Raymond Davis. **Time:** 0830-1400. **Distance:** 25 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, plains meadows, ponds, ponderosa woodland feeders, elevation 5200-6000'. **Weather:** Fine, 60-80°F. **Totals:** 62 species, 236 individuals.

June 20, Saturday *Fort Morgan Wildlife Areas (FOR)*

Leader(s): Joe Rigli and Pete Walker. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Bill Buttner, Derek Hankins, Walt and Linda Knudsen, Jennifer Larson, Tim Smart, Rick and Connie Steinkamp. **Time:** 0800-1800. **Distance:** 96 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian woodlands, sandhill-sagebrush, shortgrass prairies, creeks, lakes, ponds, fields, rivers, farms, wildlife areas, elevation 4330'. **Weather:** Cloudy, overcast, windy, cool, 66-70°F, south wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 64 species, 967 individuals.

June 21, Sunday *Palmer Lake Trails (PAL)*

Leader(s): John Drummond. **Observers:** Jackie Haytor, Diane Carter, Mary Ellen Moore, Barbara and Don Hollums, Jeff Johnson. **Time:** 0730-1145. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Mountain grassland, mid-elevation carr, ponds, scrub oak, ponderosa pine woodland, mixed coniferous forest, cliffs, elevation 7300-8000'. **Weather:** Sunny, breezy, 62-78°F. **Totals:** 50 species, 194 individuals.

Highlights: Savannah Sparrow, Lazuli Bunting, Virginia's Warbler, Macgillivray's Warbler, White-throated Swift

June 27, Saturday *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Joey Kellner. **Observers:** Debra Bogar, Nan Campbell, Paul Differding, Nelson Ford, Merikay Haggerty, Derek Hankins, Frank Hatch, Nancy Hatch, Stuart Liss, Ron Nay, Patti O'Neill, Gretchen Pascoe, Buzz Schaumburg, Richard Sheppard, Mary Zick, Kim Zoetewey, Miriam Zoetewey. **Time:** 0700-1100. **Distance:** 6 miles by car, 1.5 miles on foot. **Weather:** Mostly clear, 60-73°F, calm. **Totals:** 55 species, 343 individuals.

June 28, Sunday *Rocky Mountain National Park (ROC)*

Leader(s): Bob Righter. **Observers:** Pamela and John Breitach, Jim Duggan, Patty Echelmeyer, Nelson Fonis,

Field Trip Summaries June 2009, continued

Ed Holub, Nancy Hawkins, Walt and Linda Knudson, Chuck Lowrie, Pat McClearin, Neil Montague, Bob Montgomery, Chris Owers, Dick Pratt, Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, Heather and Matt Raymond, Rick and Connie Steinkamp, Tim Smart, Tim Schowalter, Mary Ann Rose, Paul Slingsby, Joyce and Connie Takamine. **Time:** 0800-1430. **Distance:** 60 miles by car. **Habitat:** Tundra, montaine, elevation 7500-13000'. **Weather:** Clear, west wind, 0-10mph. **Totals:** 32 species, 120 individuals.

Highlights: Spectacular looks at two white-tailed ptarmigan at 20 yards away. Studious looks through a scope of a Hammond's Flycatcher singing.

Tuesday Birders

June 2 *Cancelled due to weather*

June 9 *Lower White Ranch Park (LOW)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 34. **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, chokecherry, elevation 6150-6600'. **Weather:** Mostly cloudy to sunny, 58-68°F, no wind. **Totals:** 33 species, 96 individuals.

June 16 *Lair O'the Bear (LAI)*

Leader(s): Mary Keithler. **Observers:** 26 (two groups). **Time:** 0830-1130. **Distance:** 2.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, some ponderosa pine and blue spruce, elevation 6350'. **Weather:** Sunny, calm, 55-75°F, no wind. **Totals:** 40 species, 192 individuals.

June 23 *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 37. **Time:** 0830-1300. **Distance:** 12.4 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Large reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, grassy areas, shoreline, elevation 5430'. **Weather:** Calm, partly cloudy to sunny, 59-79°F, wind 0-3mph. **Totals:** 52 species, 326 individuals.

June 30 *Reynolds Park Jeffco Open Space (REY)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 29 (two groups). **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 1 miles by car, 4 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian with narrow leaf cottonwood, ponderosa pine and Douglas fir, elevation 7100-7750'. **Weather:** Sunny and clear, calm, 58-78°F, no wind. **Totals:** 34 species, 107 individuals.

June Additional Reports

Species	Date	Number	Location	County	Observers & comments
Screech-Owl, Eastern	5-Jun	1	Crow Valley Campground	Weld	Paul Differding, Allison Hilt, Joey Kellner, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Glenn Walbek
Screech-Owl, Western	25-Jun	1 ad, 2 juv.	Littleton, my backyard	Arapahoe	Doris Cruze
Warbler, Audubon's	5-Jun	1m LATE on plains	Wash. Co. Golf Course Pond/Park	Washington	Paul Differding, Allison Hilt, Joey Kellner, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Glenn Walbek
Warbler, black-and-white	5-Jun	1f	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Paul Differding, Allison Hilt, Joey Kellner, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Glenn Walbek
Warbler, MacGillivray's	5-Jun	1 LATE on plains	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Paul Differding, Allison Hilt, Joey Kellner, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Glenn Walbek
Ovenbird	4-Jun	6 calling, 3 seen	Deer Cr. Canyon Open Space	Jefferson	Kathy Mihm-Dunning
Warbler, Kentucky	30-Jun	1	Gregory Canyon	Boulder	Kathy Mihm-Dunning, MOB
Warbler, Hooded	28-Jun	1	Gregory Canyon	Boulder	Kathy Mihm-Dunning, MOB
Tanager, Scarlet	28-Jun	1	Gregory Canyon	Boulder	Kathy Mihm-Dunning, MOB
Crossbill, red	5-Jun	6 (family group (1m, 1f, 4 imm))	Crow Valley Campground	Weld	Paul Differding, Allison Hilt, Joey Kellner, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler, Glenn Walbek

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 1221 E Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

What's in a Name?

Have you ever seen a Bewick's Wren? Actually the little bird was collected (*shot*) by Audubon in 1811 and he named it for Thomas Bewick, an English ornithologist and engraver, famous for woodcuts of British birds. His works were renowned amongst natural history students. Audubon was quoted as calling Mr. Bewick "A son of Nature". Mr. Bewick met with Audubon and Wm. Swainson (*another familiar name*) for an informal gathering shortly before his death in 1828.



Did you know that the Krider's Hawk, named for John Krider (1819 – 1896) is also known as a Fuertes Hawk? Louis Agassiz Fuertes, an ornithologist, became a well known painter of birds during his life, 1874 – 1927. He travelled extensively concentrating on painting birds. Mr. Fuertes also lectured at Cornell University from 1923 until his untimely death in 1927. Back to Krider....he will be next month's subject along with his traveling companion Dr. Adolpus Lewis Heermann.

Source: "Whose Bird" – Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins" Good birding to all, Niña

Climate Link to Mockingbird Songs

Unpredictable weather seems to stimulate chatter among birds - as well as humans - according to researchers.

A team of US scientists has found that mockingbirds living in variable climates sing more elaborate songs. Complex tunes, sung by males to impress females, are likely to signal the birds' intelligence.

Published in *Current Biology*, the findings suggest that females seek mates with superior singing skills - smart enough to survive harsh climes. Carlos Botero, a researcher from the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center in North Carolina, led the study. He and his colleagues compared recordings of 29 species of mockingbird, studying patterns in their songs including the number of different notes, the number of syllables and the birds' abilities to mimic other sounds.

His team then compared weather patterns in the birds' habitats with the patterns in the songs. Dr Botero told BBC News that it was "very exciting" to see a strong correlation between song complexity and climate. "The birds are not born knowing how to sing; they have to learn," he explained. The fact that the males sing more variable tunes in a more variable climate could demonstrate the "sexual selection of intelligence". This means that females may be looking for a tuneful signal that their prospective partner is a good catch.

Local climate patterns are good indicators of how challenging life is in a given location, Dr Botero explained. "Survival and reproduction become more complicated when weather patterns are unpredictable because you don't know when food will be available or how long it will be around. "In really difficult or demanding environments you would expect females to be choosier."



Carlos Botero's approach to song recording

He added that researchers might be able to use this simple, measurable behavior in the birds, to provide clues about the evolution of important human developments such as language, music and art. Sandra Vehrencamp from Cornell University, who was also involved in the study said that, to fully test this explanation, the team would need to design an intelligence test for the male birds, and examine their relative breeding success. During the course of the study, Dr Botero embarked on a solitary month-long tour of South America, seeking out elusive birds and recording their songs. Thanks to his expedition, some key gaps in the library of birdsong at Cornell University, where he was based during the study, are now filled. "I had to try to visit as many different countries as possible at exactly the right time - when the birds were breeding," he said, adding that some of the remote locations he visited were like "mockingbird paradise".

From the BBC Web Site: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8062420.stm>

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The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter—the *Lark Bunting*—sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Treasurer. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair, Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is not mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for publication in the following month's issue. The Editors reserve the right to accept or refuse and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is required.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80232, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net.

Additional Reports

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 1221 E Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dabccook@comcast.net
Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com.

Our web site, www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check for last minutes trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Denver Field Ornithologists 2009 Membership Application

Please indicate: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

**All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year
if paid after October 1st.**

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00

☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

☐ Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$_____

With the Rock Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists website.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

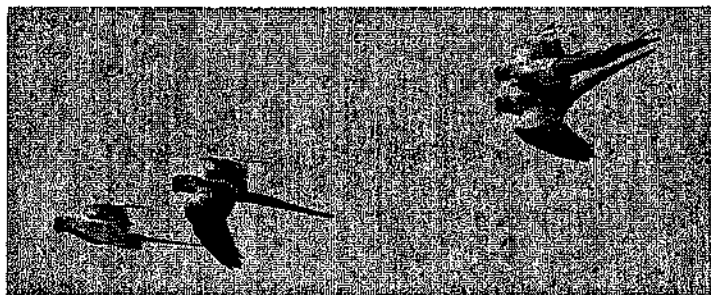
Zip _____

Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting Email address: _____

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



DFO feature presentations resume this month.

On August 24 at 7.30pm John Drummond will share
highlights and photographs of his
recent trip to Bolivia.

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE AUGUST 2009														
SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS										TUESDAY BIRDERS			TOTAL
DATE	1	2	8	9	15	16	22	23	29	30	4	11	18	
LOCATION	DAV	ROC	BEL	LOW	CHE	GRE	PAR	RIG	WHE	NOR	ALD	VAL	GOL	
Red-billed Grebe				3	2					3				8
Western Grebe				20						10				30
Clark's Grebe										2				2
American White Pelican			30	20	42					104				196
Double-crested Cormorant				20	10				10	42			1	83
American Bittern				1						1				2
Great Blue Heron	1			8	12		3			14				38
Great Egret										1				1
Snowy Egret			18	25	30		6		3	8				88
Little Blue Heron										1				1
Cattle Egret				20										20
Black-crowned Night-Heron			2						1	2				5
White-faced Ibis				5	2					1				8
Turkey Vulture	4	1	1			4	6		3	4	1			24
Canada Goose			27	30	30		6		70	35				198
Wood Duck			8						4	3				15
Gadwall			9	2					5					16
Mallard		6	28	20	30		12		30				3	127
Blue-winged Teal				20						17				37
Cinnamon Teal				4										4
Teal sp.									2					2
Northern Shoveler				2						6				8
Green-winged Teal				6	3					2				11
Redhead										3				3
Lesser Scaup														0
Ruddy Duck										4				4
Osprey										1				1
Mississippi Kite										1				1
Bald Eagle				1										1
Northern Harrier				1						1				2
Sharp-shinned Hawk						2								2
Cooper's Hawk	1	1	1			6	1		2					12
Swainson's Hawk				12	1		1		1	15				30
Red-tailed Hawk	2			7		2				8	1		1	22
Rough-legged Hawk						2								0
Golden Eagle										1				3
American Kestrel			3	6	4		1		2	18				32
Merlin														1
Prairie Falcon	1									1				2
Wild Turkey										1				1
Virginia Rail				3	2					4				9
Sora				1	3					1				5
American Coot				10						74				84
Semipalmated Plover										5				5
Killdeer				50	30		30		2	25				137
Black-necked Stilt				3										3
American Avocet				5	1									6
Greater Yellowlegs				3			1			1				5
Lesser Yellowlegs				10			2			1				13
Solitary Sandpiper				2			2							4
Spotted Sandpiper			1	4	10		1			2				18
Marbled Godwit				2						5				7
Semipalmated Sandpiper										10				10
Western Sandpiper				1			13			2				16
Least Sandpiper				1			5			9				15
Baird's Sandpiper				6						145				151
Pectoral Sandpiper										1				1

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE AUGUST 2009

SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS										TUESDAY BIRDS:			
	1	2	8	9	15	16	22	23	29	30	4	11	18	TOTAL
LOCATION	DAW	ROC	BEL	LOW	CHE	GRE	PAR	RIG	WHI	NOR	ALD	VAI	GOL	
Cliff Swallow				3	40					6				75
Barn Swallow			24	10	30		5		6	31	4			110
Black-capped Chickadee	8	2	7		2	1	3		6				2	31
Mountain Chickadee	5	2					27	4			36		8	80
Red-breasted Nuthatch						12					2			16
White-breasted Nuthatch	4					3	2				10		2	27
Pygmy Nuthatch	3	8									3		4	27
Brown Creeper	1					4					2			7
Canyon Wren						7	1							8
House Wren	4	18		2	4	2	1			2	2			38
Marsh Wren				2										2
American Dipper		1												1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		1				1						1		3
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	7							1		1				9
Western Bluebird	1	2											18	36
Mountain Bluebird		8									12			32
Townsend's Solitaire											1			1
American Robin	8	4	2		1					17	7	5		57
Gray Catbird					1									1
Brown Thrasher										2				2
European Starling				100	8		8			116				229
American Pipit		18												18
Yellow Warbler				2	8		3			4				15
Yellow-rumped Warbler		2											2	11
"Audubon's" race		2												(9)
American Redstart										1				1
Kentucky Warbler						1								1
MacGillivray's Warbler		1												1
Common Yellowthroat				10	2					7				19
Wilson's Warbler										8		2		10
Warbler sp									1					1
Western Tanager		1										1		9
Green-tailed Towhee		3												5
Spotted Towhee	23					1	7							31
Chipping Sparrow	13	11				4	1			5	10			64
Spizella sp.									1					1
Vesper Sparrow		10								4	8			22
Lark Sparrow				20	8		7			6	7			47
Lark Bunting				10						96				105
Fox Sparrow														0
Song Sparrow										1				1
Unadorned Sparrow		4									4			8
White-crowned Sparrow		1										14		15
Dark-eyed Junco	10						1				4	3	4	24
"State-colored" race							1							(1)
"Gray-headed" race											3	3	(4)	(12)
Black-headed Grosbeak				3										3
Lazuli Bunting							1							1
Cockatiel				1										1
Red-winged Blackbird	1	1	4	120	45					65			1	237
Western Meadowlark				20			3			54				77
Yellow-headed Blackbird				2						52				54
Common Grackle			3	100			10							113
Great-tailed Grackle				1										1
Brown-headed Cowbird	12			10			1							23
Bullock's Oriole				3		1								4
Pine Grosbeak												1		1
Cassin's Finch							15							15
House Finch	4		5	15	16	2			5	3	6		13	70
Red Crossbill	4	3									3			14
Pine Siskin						4	5					2		25
Lesser Goldfinch	32					11	7							55
"Green-backed" race							7							(7)
American Goldfinch	2			5	30	1	15		1	4				64
House Sparrow				50			1			135				180
Mock Parakeet														1
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	285	162	214	1358	621	141	256	0	187	2464	168	37	72	8,025
TOTAL SPECIES	39	36	25	75	48	26	53	0	29	87	26	10	18	158
OBSERVATION LEGEND:														
a=adult, f=female, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only, c=calling, s=singing, b=display, r=rare, u=unusual, + =also in addition to.														
x=Individual data incomplete/not enumerated														
DAW - Dawson Butte Ranch Open Space														
ROC - Rocky Mountain National Park														
BEL - Belmer Historic Park														
LOW - Lower Latham and Loloff Reservoirs, Beebe Draw, Barr Lake State Park														
CHE - Cherry Creek State Park														
GRE - Gregory Canyon														
PAR - Parker Regional Park and Castlewood Canyon														
RIG - Rigil Ranch														
WHI - Wheeler Ridge Green Belt														
NOR - Northeastern Colorado, Prewitt and Jackson Reservoirs														
ALD - Alderfer Three Sisters Jaffco Open Space Park														
VAI - Vail Pass, Shrine Pass, and Mt Holy Cross Overlook														
GOL - Golden Gate State Park														
UPP - Upper White Ranch Park														



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

September 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44, Number 9

An Urban Gem: Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Monday, September 28, 2009



The September feature meeting presents the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel discuss the recent history and abundant wildlife resources of this 17,000 acre National Wildlife Refuge located just north of Denver's old Stapleton Airport. The refuge has a life list in excess of 225 avian species, over 100 of which were recorded on this year's Spring Bird Count. There are also great opportunities for viewing a wide variety of non-feathered wildlife species within the boundaries of the Arsenal.

In the early 1940s the United States Army purchased the site for a World War II weapons production facility which included the making of chemical weapons. Weapons production continued until the 1960s along with the production of chemical fertilizers which continued until 1982. Waste products from these activities were disposed of on site and ultimately led to significant contamination of soils and groundwater. This led to the Arsenal being declared a Superfund site by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Continued on page 3

September Field Trips



Saturday, September 5

McClintock and Enchanted Mesa Trails

Leader: Paul Slingsby, (303)422-3728

Meet Leader at 0700 at the Ward Road Park 'n Ride, exit 266 from I-70 and one block north. These trails are somewhat steep but not difficult. We'll bird these trails plus a bit of Mesa Trail (Boulder

Open Space) in the morning; lunch optional, and for those who want to we'll check out Walden (Cottonwood Marsh) in the afternoon. Please notify Paul in advance if you plan to attend.

Sunday, September 6

Chico Basin Ranch

Leader: John Drummond, jxdrummo@aol.com (719)488-3700 A very special opportunity to visit this incredible migratory hot spot with someone who knows it well! Meet Leader at 0700 at the Park 'n Ride in Monument, I-25 exit 161. Bring lunch and plenty of water, and plan to hike about for a couple of miles. We will finish in early afternoon. There is a \$10 per-person entrance fee paid to the ranch. We'll be looking for Fall migrants; the RMBO banding station may be operational. Please notify John of your intent to participate, preferably by e-mail. For details of the ranch, please visit their website at www.chicobasinranch.com.

Saturday and Sunday, September 12 and 13

Fall Bird Counts Details on page 7

Saturday, September 19

Rocky Mountain National Park

Leader: Chris Owens, (303)772-6048 Meet Leader at 0800 at the Beaver Meadows Visitors' Center. What better way to spend the last weekend of summer than by taking in the splendor of the Park in pursuit of its avian treasures!

September Field Trips, continued

Bring a lunch along for this 3/4 day adventure, and don't forget the sunscreen.

Sunday, September 20 *Prewitt Reservoir and the Eastern Plains*

Leader: Bill Schmoker, bill@schmoker.org Meet Leader at 0700 at the Pepper Pod Restaurant in Hudson at the junction of I-76 and highway 52. Bill will use his uncanny divining skills to lead us to where the birds are at various hot-spots along the I-76 corridor. Expect the unexpected! Full day trip; bring lunch, and plan to consolidate into carpools from Hudson. Bring a radio and a scope if you have one.

Saturday, September 26 *Rocky Mountain Arsenal*

Leader: Dave Rhoades, (303)424-8633 Meet Leader at 0800 at the Arsenal Visitors' Center at 56th and Havana and enjoy a guided birding tour of the Arsenal until 1 pm. Lunch optional. This is a space-limited trip; pre-registration with the leader is required.

Sunday, September 27 *Lyons Area Birding with the Such Brothers*

Leaders: Marcel (age 13) and Joel (age 11) Such

Contact: Davis, (303)823-5332. DFO is pleased to offer this special youth-led trip in partnership with the Boulder Bird Club. Marcel and Joel are exceptionally talented young birders; they have won awards from the American Birding Association for their field notes and photography, and youth participation for this trip is encouraged. Meet the boys and their able assistant, Raymond Davis, at 0800 at the Lyons Park-'n Ride for a fun morning's instruction in bird behavior. Half-day trip; lunch is optional.

Isn't it about time?

Time may be the most precious commodity we have as humans on this earth, so it's natural to guard one's time closely. It is true, though, that when we do give our time to anyone or any effort, we and those to whom we give may benefit richly.

DFO's trip leaders have been giving of their time and expertise generously for years. It is through these generous gifts that DFO is able to provide two trips every week of the year, a truly phenomenal service considering all the leaders are volunteers and the trips are free.

At this time, we need some of our members who have been treated to many trips over the years by our wonderful leaders to come forward and lead some trips of their own. As a leader, you get to decide where you're going, how long you'll be out, how dynamic vs relaxing you want the experience to be, and what day you want to go. Any day of the week is fine, although we will always try to have at least half the trips on week-ends. You just pick a parking lot where people will meet, work with the trip schedulers to get it on the schedule and have fun.

Please contact trip schedulers Meredith Anderson 303 280-8576, meander303@mac.com or Jackie King 303 287-1644, dacbcocook@comcast.net if you're willing to help.

Also, to all trip leaders please return trip scheduler phone calls even if you dread saying "No" to them. They would rather know what you're thinking than to be strung along wondering whether you're going to end up doing the proposed trip or not. Please return their calls without delay so they can go about finding someone else if you're not available.

Finally, additional trip scheduler partners are needed to help out with these scheduling calls.

Giving of your time as you have received from others can be rewarding.

Carol Blackard

Rocky Mountain Arsenal, continued

Cleanup has been underway for years and as Hugh Kingery states in his recent book *Birding Colorado*, the Arsenal is a National Audubon Important Bird Area (IBA) and is "a Superfund site that will soon offer premier wildlife viewing."

In the winter of 1986 a communal roost of bald eagles was discovered at the Arsenal which caught the attention of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This ultimately led to the designation of the site as a National Wildlife Refuge in 1992. The 27 square mile Arsenal property, with the contamination fairly localized in the center, is a parcel of shortgrass prairie (steppe ecoregion) which boasts wetlands, lakes, and deciduous woodlands. One can find nesting bald eagles and burrowing owls, mule deer, badgers, tiger salamanders, monarch butterflies, the black-tailed prairie dog (a keystone species), and even wintering ferruginous hawks stalking "the dogs" trying to capture a winter meal. All this within sight of downtown Denver!

For more read *When Nature Heals: The Greening of Rocky Mountain Arsenal* by Shattil, Madson, Rozinski, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (1990); Lynn Willcockson in *A Birder's Guide to Colorado* (1997; pages 122-124); Hugh Kingery in *Birding Colorado* (2007; page 109); or the Arsenal's website www.fws.gov/rockymountainarsenal.

So do join us Monday, September 28th as members of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service share the latest information on the Arsenal as well as its two sister sites, Two Ponds and Rocky Flats.

The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month August to April (but excluding December. All DFO meetings are interesting and the company of bird watchers is always worthwhile to keep. DOORS OPEN BY 7:00pm AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30pm. Plan to arrive by 7:15pm on these dates. Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium in Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7pm and 7:30pm. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Welcome New Members!

C. Raymond Clark, 164 Lafayette St, Denver 80218, 303.698.2898
Lois Himes, 5225 S Prince St Apt 1212, Littleton 80123, 303.770.6023
Bonnie Orkow & Bruce Blodgett, PO Box 1049, Crestone, Co 81131, 303.355.8674

What birds to look for in September and where to look for them

DFO Birders,

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

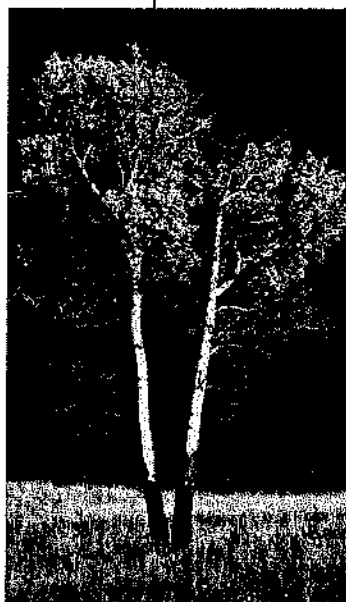
In September, the average high in Denver is 77 degrees and the average low is 48 degrees, down 9 degrees on the high and low from August, although it has reached 97 and has fallen to 17. September has very changeable weather as illustrated by the September 17, 1971 snowstorm that dumped more than 2 feet of snow on the Front Range foothills. I remember that storm as I had just arrived at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins as a sophomore and all the kids from California who had never seen snow were going crazy making snow angels.

The temperature had dropped nearly 60 degrees in 48 hours. In contrast, Eads reported 107 degrees in 1947.

Populus tremuloides, Quaking Aspen, will be in their peak colors in the high country by the fourth weekend of the month and elk have started their reveille in September. Elk bugling reaches its peak about the same time the aspen's palate of color does in late September and early October.

Fall migration really starts to pick up with Labor Day weekend. This seems to be the best time to look for Canada Warbler in places like Prewitt Reservoir SWA and Barr Lake State Park. Earlier this decade, Canada Warbler was seen three years in a row at Barr Lake (near the banding station) around Labor Day. You should also look low for Mourning and Connecticut Warblers later in the month in wetter areas. Sparrow, warbler and other songbird migration increase in numbers in September. Raptor migration starts picking up late in the month.

Check for migrants the morning after an Arctic front moves through. Large numbers of birds sometimes pass through on the heels of these Arctic fronts. The Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, Crow Valley Campground in Weld County, Valco Ponds in Pueblo, Bel Mar Park in Lakewood and Barr Lake State Park can be good migrant traps in fall migration. The banding stations at Barr Lake and Chico Basin usually turn up a few good birds. If you can find the right habitat, September can still be a good month for shorebirds.



The habitat part could be hard this year as water levels are high. Check Prewitt SWA and Lake Jackson State Park if the water is low enough for mudflats but don't forget about the other shorebird habitats I mentioned in the August column like Lower Latham Reservoir, Loloff Reservoir and Beebe Draw.

Terns start coming through in numbers so remember to watch for Arctic Tern mixed in the Forster's and Commons. In early October 2000, there were Arctic Terns at Chatfield Reservoir.

I would like to thank Norm Lewis and Karl Stecher for their contributions to this month's column.

By Ira Sanders

If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greateauk@msn.com.

July Field Trip Summaries

July 3-5, Fri-Sun

North Park - Joint Trip with BBC (NOR)

Leader(s): Chuck Lowrie. **Observers:** Gail Campbell, Edie Israel, Elena Klaver, Carol ?, Claire Delany, Tony Delany, Patty Echelmeyer. **Time:** 0530-2000. **Distance:** 100 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Sage, riparian, forest, montane forest, willow carr, lakes, elevation 8400-9500'. **Weather:** Sun, clouds, severe rain, 45-75°F, north and west wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 100 species, 1144 individuals.

July 11, Saturday

Quincy Reservoir (QUI)

Leader(s): Mary Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** Nancy Osbourne, Jonanna Walter, Kay Senechal, Irene Horn and 3 more. **Time:** 0730-0944. **Distance:** 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian corridor, reservoir. **Weather:** Sunny and hot, 70-83°F. **Totals:** 26 species, 153 individuals.

July 12, Sunday

O'Fallon and Lair O' the Bear Parks (OFA)

Leader(s): Alison Kondler. **Observers:** Lind Broeren, Diane Carter, Patty Echelmeyer, Donna Levene, Chuck Lowrie, Tim Smart. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 14 miles by car, 2.5 miles on foot. **Weather:** High clouds, 65-80°F. **Totals:** 49 species, 200 individuals.

July 16, Thursday

Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)

Leader(s): Mary Keithler. **Observers:** Pat Franklin, Jill Boice, Pauline Ide, Warren Finch, Don Belt, John Browder. **Time:** 0730-1300. **Distance:** 12 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Open water, wetlands, elevation 5650'. **Weather:** Sunny, 70-90°F, northwest wind, 0-7mph. **Totals:** 44 species, 390 individuals. **Highlights:** Black-chinned and broad-tailed hummingbirds at the park headquarters feed, altercation between juvenile red-tailed hawk and pair of Swainson's hawks, yellow-breasted chat at shop-creek trail.

July 18, Saturday

Golden Gate Canyon State Park (GOL)

Leader(s): Paula Hensley. **Observers:** Dan Brachear, Nan Campbell, Steve Campbell, Jean Frazier, Chuck Lowrie, Tim Smart, John Weslar, Karen Weslar, Mary Zick, Dick ?. **Time:** 0815-1300. **Distance:** 6 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Montane ponderosa, aspen; riparian; willow cottonwood, aspen, elevation 7800-8000'. **Weather:** Clear, 60-75°F. **Totals:** 41 species, 141 individuals. **Highlights:** Ruby-crowned kinglet feeding cowbird fledglings; red-naped sapsucker 2-5' from group, sapsucking on willow; warbling vireo and cordilleran flycatcher nests at eye level with large babies.

July 19, Sunday

Brainard Lake, cabin in Peaceful Valley (BRA)

Leader(s): Joanna Chan and Chishun Kwang. **Observers:** Chuck Lowrie, Maggie Boswell, Joyce Takamine, Connie Takamine, Tim Smart, Diane Carter, Patti Echelmeyer, Alison Kondler, Tina Jones. **Time:** 0800-1400. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, ½ mile on foot. **Habitat:** Spruce, fir, willow carr, mountain stream/lake, elevation 10000'. **Weather:** Sunny, partly cloudy, 70-85°F, calm. **Totals:** 34 species, 401 individuals.

July 22, Wednesday

Filius Park, Echo Lake, Empire (FIL)

Leader(s): Lynn Willcockson. **Observers:** Joe and Corrinne Bartell, Sue Clasen, Gale Evans, Derik and Peggy Hankins, Skip Perkins (Wisconsin), Dick Prickett, Sue Schulman. **Time:** 0730-1600. **Distance:** 61 miles by car, 2½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine, spruce forests, elevation 7700-10600'. **Weather:** Clear to partly cloudy, 47-68°F, variable wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 46 species, 211 individuals.

July 25, Saturday

Genesee Park and two local homes' feeders (GEN)

Leader(s): Karen von Saltza. **Observers:** Francis Commercon, Joyce Commercon, Mackenzie Goldthwait, Doug Kibbe, Peggy Wait, Mary Zink, Nan O'Neal Cooper, Sue Clausen, John and Karen Weslar, Jean Frazier, Nicole Buyck. **Time:** 0730-1300. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine, some mixed conifers, alpine meadows, elevation 8000+'. **Weather:** Slightly overcast, no wind, 75-83°F. **Totals:** 28 species, 223 individuals.

July 26, Sunday

Pine/Cheesman Reservoir Area (PIN)

Leader(s): Chris A Blakeslee. **Observers:** Karel Buckley, Christy Honnen, Dick Prickett, Toni Rautus, Nia Routh, Tim Smart, Kathryn Smith, Steve Smith. **Time:** 0745-1530. **Distance:** 24 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Mountain riparian (river, stream, and lake), meadow, mixed conifer, and the Buffalo Creek burn area (ponderosa pine), elevation 6600-8400. **Weather:** Partly cloudy to overcast and rain, 60-75°F, wind 0-12mph. **Totals:** 52 species, 333 individuals. **Highlights:** We discovered abundant evidence of an active breeding season - many juvenile birds. We encountered a western tanager exhibiting flycatching behavior but grabbing ripe berries off branches too small to perch on. The most humorous moment occurred when we witnessed a small

What's in a name?

Mr. Krider and Dr. Heermann travelled together to Florida in 1848 for a bird collecting expedition. Now that sounds like a heck of a field trip!



Dr. Adolphus L. Heermann, (as in Heermann's Gull) (1827-1865), an army physician and naturalist was associated with the Smithsonian Institute through the attention of Spencer Baird and was assigned to a surveying party for the Pacific Railroad. He was a collector of bird eggs and is credited with the term "oology" for this practice.

Unfortunately he died in 1852, resulting from his stumbling and the accidental discharge of his gun. The gull was named by John Cassin for Heermann.

Good birding to all, Nifia

Source: "Whose Bird" – Bo Beolens and Michael Watkins

July Field Trip Summaries, continued

flock of juvenile common mergansers surf and splash their way across rapids on the Forth Fork of the South Platte River. They survived and were reunited with mom.

Tuesday Birders

July 7

Stapleton Park, Selby's Feeder, Genessee Mountain Park (STA)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 27. **Time:** 0830-1200. **Distance:** 8½ miles by car, ¾ mile on foot. **Habitat:** Feeders in yard, ponderosa pine/spruce woodland, aspen, Douglas fir, elevation 7200-7600'. **Weather:** Clear, calm, 66-71°F, wind 0-3mph. **Totals:** 32 species, 155 individuals.

July 14

Pine Valley Ranch Jeffco Open Space Park (JEF)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 28 (two groups). **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 4 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Reservoir with lake, ponderosa pine, blue spruce, Douglas fir and grass meadows, elevation 7200'. **Weather:** Sunny, calm 65-74°F, no wind. **Totals:** 39 species, 138 individuals.

July 21

Squaw Pass and Echo Lake

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 21. **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 22 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lodgepole, spruce, aspen, bristlecone pine, small lake, open meadows, elevation 7230-10650'. **Weather:** Cloudy to sunny, 54-59°F, no wind. **Totals:** 29 species, 83 individuals.

July 28

Mt Evans Wildlife Area (MTE)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 13. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 4 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, willow, lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, aspen, Colorado spruce, Douglas fir, elevation 9400-9700'. **Weather:** Partly cloudy to mostly cloudy, 59-62°F, east wind 0-6mph. **Totals:** 31 species, 111 individuals.

July Additional Reports

Species	Date	# seen	Location	County	Observers
Loon, red-throated	7/18	1 basic plumage	Marston Reservoir	Denver	Tim Smart, Joey Kellner
Tern, Caspian	7/15	1	CherryCreek Res.	Arapahoe	Bob Brown
Roadrunner, greater	7/11	2	Higbee Cemetery	Otero	Joey Kellner, Dick Schottler, Steve Larson
Flycatcher, Alder	7/26	1 singing!	Gunnison	Gunnison	Steve Stachowiak, Joey Kellner

2009 Fall Count

Denver has conducted Fall Bird Counts for over 20 years. Denver Field Ornithologists and ASGD sponsor this tradition. No fees, but some sites require a state parks pass or pre-registration. Bring binoculars, scopes for the reservoir counts, field guide, and lunch. Everyone welcome to help – more eyes see more birds.

Saturday, Sept. 12

Waterton, downstream. 4-5 mile hike. Wear long pants (not shorts) due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed. Leader: Hugh Kingery, 303-814-2723 Meet at 0630 at Discovery Pavilion (left turn immediately after turning onto Waterton/Roxborough road and before the DOW parking lot for Waterton Canyon).

Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leader: Bob Brown, 303-791-6204 Meet at 0700 at Marina, inside west gate near Cherry Creek High School. State Parks Pass required.

Chatfield State Park

Leader, Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748. Meet at 0630 at West (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks Pass required.

Barr Lake periphery. This trip does not involve much walking and will be good for people with limited mobility or stamina. Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. jackie.king@ccd.edu Meet at 0700 at entrance gate to Barr Lake State Park.

Barr Lake State Park. This is a ten-mile (or equivalent), all-day hike around the lake

Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035.

Meet at 0630 at RMBO, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane. South off Bromley Lane; from I-76, first road east of railroad track. State Parks pass required.

Lower Bear Creek & Marston Reservoir

Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551, hawkhenn@aol.com; and Bob Andrews, 303-249-5220, raconamaz@yahoo.com Meet at 0630. at the parking lot adjacent to the Conoco Station at the NE corner of Morrison Road and C470. We will bird Bear Creek Lake Park and the Bear Creek Greenbelt in the morning and Marston Reservoir in the afternoon.

Sunday Sept. 13

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Leader: Randy Lentz, 303-680-3381. If his phone sounds like a fax receiver, send him a fax!

Meet at 0630 at the Homestead. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance; Homestead is first parking lot on the left. State Parks pass required.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal.

Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723.

Call leader to sign up, before Aug. 18.

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The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter—the *Lark Bunting*—sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Treasurer. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair, Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is not mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for publication in the following month's issue. The Editors reserve the right to accept or refuse and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is required.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80232, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net.

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Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dabccook@comcast.net
Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com.

Our web site, www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check for last minutes trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Denver Field Ornithologists 2009 Membership Application

Please indicate: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00

☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

☐ Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$ _____

With the Rock Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists website.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$ _____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting Email address: _____

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

DFO Feature Presentation



**An Urban Gem: Rocky Mountain Arsenal
National Wildlife Refuge
Monday, September 28, 2009**



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

October 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44, Number 10



RMBO: Conserving Birds and Their Habitats

Monday, October 26, 2009 at 7.30pm

Longtime Karval, CO, rancher Russell Davis was skeptical when his son attempted to persuade him to attend a workshop on bird conservation presented by the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) in partnership, and with funds provided by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW). It was already hot that spring of 2002, and Davis had plenty of work to do on the ranch. The last thing he needed was a bunch of environmentalists telling him how to run the family ranch. Davis's son was persuasive, however, and Russell was one of many landowners who gathered around a hay wagon that served as a stage for RMBO's Tammy VerCauteren and representatives of CDOW, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other partners.

The speakers talked about the importance of local ranches and farms as habitat for birds and other critical wildlife. They discussed ranching and farming practices that could improve habitat with little impact on production. In some cases, new practices might even increase production. By the end of the meeting, Tammy knew the workshop was a success when Russell Davis indicated that he had been converted from being a skeptic. He subsequently worked with RMBO and agency partners to put up a fence to better manage his cattle along Horse Creek. He wanted to keep the trees for good calving

Continued on page 3

October Field Trips



Saturday, October 3 *Cherry Creek State Park*

Leader: Mary Keithler (303) 771-1421. Meet at 0800 at the Marina for ½ day trip. Lunch optional. Lingering migrants possible. Bring scopes for those "far-out" water birds and far-away tree top hawks searching for prey. (State Parks Pass required)

Sunday, October 4 *Chatfield State Park*

Leader: Ed Holub, (303) 979-2194. Meet at 0800 at swim beach. Lunch optional, but you may want to stay longer if Ed has other "hot spots" in mind. From C470, take Wadsworth South 1.5 miles to park entrance. (Parks Pass required)

Saturday, October 10 *Sand Creek Park*

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell (303) 739-2428. Must call Morrison Nature Center to register and get meeting information. Cottonwood groves and ponds around this Aurora park should have waterfowl, permanent residents and perhaps southbound species.

Sunday, October 11 *"The Big Sit"*

Leader: Joey Kellner (303) 978-1748. (Parks Pass required)

Meeting place: Heron Overlook, Chatfield State Park. From the Wadsworth Blvd entrance, go right at the T and continue around the reservoir, and a half mile after you cross the South Platte River, make a hard left into the large parking lot. At the far right corner, a trail leads down to the Heron Overlook.

October Field Trips, continued



"The Big Sit" – an international birding event, has exacting, loose and frivolous standards. "Big Sitters" count all the birds they see or hear from within a circle with a 17-foot diameter. Count "Sitters" may send out scouts and beaters to find other birds and identify them as long as a "Sitter" sees the bird from within the circle. All around the world, on this date people will Big Sit!

Come and join Joey Kellner, and other recruits any time after dawn, for an hour, a morning, or all day. Drop by whenever you like or volunteer to substitute for "Big Sit" leaders for an hour or two. (Pre-registration not required) Joey maintains an hourly chart of the birds that "Sitters" see from the circle. In the past three years he has tallied 55-65 species. Bring chairs, breakfast, lunch, dinner, picnics, coffee, etc. Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, and other essential birding equipment.

Saturday, October 17 *Barr Lake State Park*

Leader: Peggy Gonder (303) 321-3465 – Peggy prefers email contact at: peggy@gonderpr.com. Meet at 0700 at Nature Center parking lot. We will watch the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory on the last day of bird banding songbirds as they migrate through. We'll check the rest of the park for waterfowl. Scopes will be appreciated. ½ day trip, lunch optional. From Denver, take East I-76 to Bromley Lane, exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Road, then turn south about 2 miles to Park Entrance. (Parks Pass required)

Sunday, October 18 *Walden Ponds*

Leader: Kathy Dunning (303) 333-7253. Meet at 0900 at Cottonwood Parking lot for this ½ day trip, lunch optional. A chance for surprising species! From Denver: Go west on U.S. 36 to Foothills Parkway (exit C157) then north to Arapahoe Ave. then east to 75th St. Turn north on 75th past Valmont Rd and over railroad tracks. Turn left at Wildlife Habitat sign and follow road to Cottonwood Marsh Parking lot.

Saturday, October 24 *Rocky Mountain Arsenal*

Leader: David Rhoades (303) 424-8633. Must register with leader for time and directions for this popular trip. David keeps tabs on the comings and goings of the Arsenal's many species.

Sunday, October 25 *Carson Nature Center – S. Platte Park*

Leader: Bob Brown (303) 791-6204. Meet at 0830 at Nature Center parking lot. (North of Mineral Avenue, west of S. Santa Fe Drive, behind Aspen Grove Shopping Center) Should see raptors and early arriving water fowl and also permanent residents at the feeders. ½ day trip, lunch optional.

Saturday, October 31 *Wheatridge Greenbelt*

Leader: Katharine Lynch (303) 968-4750. Meet at 0830 at Prospect Park Lake north parking area, south off 44th Avenue between Quail & Robb Streets (west of Kipling) ½ day trip – Comfortable walking, it's Halloween – we'll see what we can scare up!

Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer and compiled by Cris Cook.

Welcome new member:

Kate Frost 7148 S. Magnolia Cr. Centennial, Co 80112 303.740.6111

RMBO, continued

and the USFWS Partners for Wildlife Program wanted to see a cottonwood gallery along the creek to support migratory birds and resident wildlife. Since then, Davis has opened his ranch to Mountain Plover research and encouraged his neighbors to work with RMBO and partners on habitat conservation projects. Most recently he has taken steps to enter the family ranch into a perpetual conservation easement with CDOW.

The Davis story is one example of RMBO's full-circle approach to bird conservation. At DFO's October meeting, RMBO Executive Director Tammy VerCauteren and Board Chair Chuck Hundertmark will offer an interactive presentation on the current work of the observatory. Founded at Barr Lake State Park in 1988 as Colorado Bird Observatory, the organization has grown rapidly into a regional force in bird conservation.

The observatory's Science Division works with federal and state land management agencies to provide data needed to make decisions that support preservation of critical habitat and conservation of bird populations. Recognizing that much critical bird habitat is in private ownership, the Stewardship Division works to help landowners adopt management practices that conserve or enhance wildlife habitat. The Education Division works with schools and other groups to ensure that the commitment to bird conservation will transcend generations. Finally, because critical winter habitat for many of our birds lies south of the border, RMBO's International Division works with biologists in Mexico to extend bird monitoring, stewardship and education work to Mexico.

Tammy VerCauteren holds a B.S. from Michigan State University in Wildlife Management and while working on her M.S. at the University of Nebraska she studied Sandhill Cranes. She started with RMBO in 1999 and is currently the Executive Director. Chuck Hundertmark is a long time board member with RMBO and currently serves as the Board Chair and supports RMBO in ways too numerous to list, including working as the Region #13 coordinator for the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II project.

Check out RMBO online at www.rmbo.org and come to the October meeting prepared to test your knowledge of Colorado and regional birds. There will be fun and interactive quizzes on bird identification along with information about RMBO and its important contributions to bird conservation.

November 23, 2009: Join DFO to hear Biologist Greg Levandoski discuss his research in northern Mexico on the distribution and abundance of wintering birds in Chihuahuan Desert grasslands. Greg has conducted avian research in the Bering Sea, in Caribbean thorn forests, and in 10 western states. This should be another interesting lecture! December 2009: NO DFO MEETING. Please plan to participate in the Denver Christmas Count and/or one of the many other Christmas Counts around the state!

The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the museum and walk around and enter through the museum's west door. Plan to arrive by 7:15 p.m.; DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30 P.M. If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer door, but this creates problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Wray Colorado Greater Prairie Chickens April 10-11 2010

DFO will lead a trip to Wray, Colorado the weekend of April 10-11 to view the Greater Prairie Chickens. The Wray Chamber of Commerce is taking reservations Now!

This will be a prime weekend and spaces are limited. Sign-up now. The cost is \$135 per person and includes Saturday night dinner, orientation, entertainment, hotel room, transport to lek and breakfast on Sunday morning. Fee is paid directly to Wray. Registration On-Line is preferred. www.wraychamber.net Click on photo of Prairie Chicken at top of page. Click on "Click here for additional information for Greater Prairie Chicken Tour Packages"

Sign up for "Special Tour" April 10-11. Pay \$135 per person to Wray Chamber. If you do not have a roommate yet just sign up for one room and we will notify them later. And please notify DFO trip leader Mary Burger (303-771-3431) mcburger3@juno.com If you do not want to give credit card info online, call them at 970-332-3484 or you can send them a check.

What birds to look for in October and where to look for them...

DFO Birders,

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In October, the average high in Denver is 66 degrees and the average low is 36 degrees, down 11 degrees on the high and 12 degrees on the low from September, although it has reached 89 degrees and has fallen to 3 degrees.

October is a month of temperature extremes as illustrated by the temperatures in Brown's Park on October 20, 1995. The low was 5 degrees and the high that day was 69 degrees. That one day temperature swing is a greater temperature change than some coastal cities see in a year. Gambel Oak and other oak trees (found mostly in western and southern Colorado) reach their color peak in early October. On the Front Range, Castlewood Canyon State Park near Franktown is a good place to go. Aspen trees are losing their leaves as their color extravaganza comes to a close.

Sandhill Cranes begin their southward migration and can be seen and heard in numbers ranging from two to several hundred over the eastern plains. You will frequently hear them but not see them as their almost prehistoric call carries for miles.

Waterfowl migration picks up from the trickle that began in September. By checking places like Lake Pueblo State Park, Barr Lake State Park, Sawhill and Walden Ponds in Boulder, Jumbo, Prewitt in the northeast and the plains reservoirs in the southeast, Bonny State Park north of Burlington, Totten Reservoir near Cortez, Vallecito Reservoir near Durango, Highline Reservoir near Grand Junction and Fruitgrowers Reservoir near Delta, you can see 20 or more species of dabbling and diving ducks as well as grebes and loons. Other good places to check are Big Johnson Reservoir in Colorado Springs, Monte Vista NWR near Alamosa and John Martin Reservoir 25 miles west of Lamar. The mountain reservoirs, like Spinney, Elevenmile and Antero, all near Fairplay, Hartzel and Lake George, have in recent years, turned up all three scoter species as well as rare gulls (Glaucous-winged) and four species of loons.

Of special note is the possibility of the one day wonder murrelets. Ancient and Long-billed Murrelets have been

seen at several Front Range locales in the past. It appears that all sightings have been between October 15 and December 5. Places as small as Bear Creek Lake Park in Jefferson County (November 8, 2004) and as large as Chatfield Reservoir, Lake Pueblo and Blue Mesa Reservoir have had murrelets as one day wonders.

Shorebirds are still coming through in October, though almost all are now juveniles as the adults have gone through in prior months. October is best for Black-bellied and American Golden Plovers. A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was seen on October 7, 2000 at John Martin Reservoir so rarities are a definite possibility. The variety of shorebirds is better earlier in the month.

Late migrant warblers such as Black-throated Blue Warbler, Palm Warbler, and Pine Warbler among the numerous Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped Warblers can be found almost anywhere there are trees and shrubs. Ospreys can be found at larger lakes along the foothills as they migrate south, but get increasingly difficult as the month draws to a close. Rough-legged Hawks start to make their appearance on the plains as well as migrant Short-eared Owls and Merlins.

Sabine's Gulls (juvenile birds are much more likely, but adults are not uncommon) are moving thru and along the Front Range. Chatfield Reservoir can be a good place though there have already been reports from Larimer County. This is also the best time of year for Jaegers. Watch the flocks of gulls for a falcon-like bird harassing them.

Late migrant hummingbirds pass through in October with the possibility of a "rare" or unusual species at your own feeder. Juncos, American Tree Sparrows and White-crowned Sparrows start to arrive as the last of the "warm weather" sparrows such as Chipping, Clay-colored, Vesper and Lincoln's leave. Look among flocks of White-crowned Sparrows for the occasional Harris's, White-throated or maybe even a Golden-crowned Sparrow.



Look VERY carefully at ALL Western-type kingbirds after mid-September as they are likely to be Cassin's Kingbirds, or even a "rarer" species. Colorado has two Thick-billed Kingbird records but no Tropical Kingbird records...yet.

I would like to thank Norm Lewis, Karl Stecher, Joey Kellner and Bill Kaempfer for their contributions to this month's column. If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greaatank@msn.com. All suggestions and contributions are gratefully accepted.

August Field Trip Summaries

Aug 1, Saturday *Dawson Butte Ranch Open Space (DAW)*

Leader(s): Doris Cruze. **Observers:** Ian de la Rosa (with brother and baby), Beverly Dugay, Kate Frost, Bob and Jackie Heyda, Barbara and Don Hollums, Kris Koff, Alison Kondler, Nancy Osborne, Dick Prickett, Tim Smart, Paul and Phoebe Thayer. **Time:** 0730-1200. **Distance:** 2½ -5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine, scrub oak, open meadows, elevation 6700'. **Weather:** Clear, 55-76°F, south-southwest wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 39 species, 265 individuals.

Aug 2, Sunday *Rocky Mountain National Park (ROC)*

Leader(s): Ed Holub. **Observers:** Joe and Corrinne Bartell, Mary Burger, Thomas Holub, Ellie Jones, Michael and Diana King, Glenn Rodriguez, Tim Smart, Barbara Thomas. **Time:** 0800-1600. **Distance:** 64 miles by car, 1¼ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Tundra, mountain meadow, mountain stream and forest, elevation 5800-12000'. **Weather:** Sunny, 43-84°F, north wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 36 species, 152 individuals.

Aug 8, Saturday *Belmar Historic Park (BEL)*

Leader(s): Karleen Schofield. **Observers:** Rick Creswell, Jean Davis, Gail Evans, Warren Finch, Lois Levinson, Stuart Liss. **Time:** 0730-1130. **Distance:** ¼ mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, man-made lake, grasslands, wetlands, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Sunny, mild, 65-78°F. **Totals:** 25 species, 214 individuals. **Highlights:** One pair Eurasian Collared Dove seen at Belmar on August 4th, first sighting there.

Aug 9, Sunday *Lower Latham and Loloff Res, Beebe Draw, Barr Lake State Park (LOW)*

Leader(s): Ira and Tammy Sanders. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Don Beltz, Nan Campbell, Steve Campbell, John Drummond, Christy Honnen, Edie Israel, Mary Keithler, Jeannie Mitchell, Joann Pettinicchio, Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, Tim Smart, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp, Mary Zick. **Time:** 0700-1530. **Distance:** 129 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Reservoirs, marsh and mudflats, agriculture. **Weather:** Overcast and partly cloudy to clear, 59-84°F, calm. **Totals:** 75 species, 1358 individuals. **Highlights:** Some observers got a glimpse of an American Bittern and some a Dickcissel.

Aug 15, Saturday *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Mary Burger. **Observers:** Karen Bellina, Pauline Ide, Mary Keithler, Jeannie Mitchell, Kelly Shipe, Sue Schulman, Steve and Jean Stevenson, David Weimer, Bill Wuerthele. **Time:** 0730-1230. **Distance:** 6 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, riparian, elevation 5550'. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, 64-80°F. **Totals:** 46 species, 521 individuals. **Highlights:** Two White-faced Ibis, juvenile Virginia Rails and Sora at Beaver Pond

Aug 16, Sunday *Gregory Canyon (GRE)*

Leader(s): Paul Slingsby. **Observers:** Jacques Chartier, Jim Duggan, Mary Keithler, Laurie Mazzola, Lou Mazzola, Nina Routh, Tim Smart, Kathryn Smith, Steve Smith, Connie Steinkamp, Rick Steinkamp. **Time:** 0730-1215. **Distance:** 60 miles by car, 5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, montane shrub, Ponderosa pine/Douglas fir forest. **Weather:** Clear sky, 60-75°F, west wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 26 species, 141 individuals (11 fledglings). **Highlights:** Altogether we saw eight accipiters. First was a Cooper's Hawk fledgling being harassed by a Broad-tailed Hummingbird and Lesser Goldfinch. Close views of three Cooper's Hawk adults and three fledglings; one was consuming prey (bird) in dense cover only 30 yards from our trail. Also saw fledglings of Black-capped Chickadees, Mountain Chickadees, Canyon Wrens and Chipping Sparrows.

Aug 22, Saturday *Parker Regional Park and Castlewood Canyon (PAR)*

Leader(s): Sue Schulman. **Observers:** Jean Eddins, Stuart Liss, John Weslar, Karen Weslar, Annette Wesley, Maureen ?. **Time:** 0700-1300. **Distance:** 20 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, ponds, fields, canyon, elevation 5280-6000+'. **Weather:** Clear, very hot, 65-93°F. **Totals:** 53 species, 256 individuals.

Aug 23, Sunday *Rigli Ranch (RIG)*

Leader(s): Joe Rigli. **Observers:** Margaret Arp, Edie Israel, Dick Prickett, Peter Walker. **Time:** 0830-1400. **Distance:** 5 miles by car, 1½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian woodlands, sandhill-sagebrush, shortgrass prairies, creeks, ponds, fields, elevation 4330'. **Weather:** Clear to partly cloudy, warm, sunny, 70-85°F, light south wind, 5-10mph. **Totals:** 38 species, 237 individuals. (not shown on Excel chart). **Highlights:** Solitary Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, three Burrowing Owls, Least Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Sage Thrasher, McGillivray's Warbler, Spotted Towhee, Three Clay-colored Sparrows, three Grasshopper Sparrows, six Dickcissels.

BONNY LAKE STATE PARK

by Carol Blackard

Built in 1948-1951 for flood control by the Bureau of Reclamation, Bonny Reservoir served for decades as a boating and fishing haven and the campgrounds were full to bursting with families and sportsmen enjoying themselves. Those were the days for Papa' Bait and Tackle Shop was bustling and the beautiful cottonwood-bordered water provided an oasis for those in western Kansas and eastern Colorado, a place to get away from the harsh heat and frying winds of the plains. Fish were large and plentiful and the sandy shores were refreshing. Where water is good, fishing is good, and where fishing is good and vegetation is healthy, birds are not far behind.

Those were the good old days for Bonny. Since the late 1990's water has been steadily dropping to the point that most of the boat ramps are dry, and the long finger of water that invited campers to the North Cove has completely dried up and filled in with vegetation. Stand on the sand near the picnic tables on the south side where cool water used to lap your toes and you will find that the shore is now over one hundred yards from your feet. The lake is receding this summer, despite the best rains in over

a decade, due to water releases to Kansas required to satisfy the legal settlement imposed on Colorado for violating terms of Kansas-Colorado water agreements. Only the smallest boats can access the lake and only from one marina and the fishing is no good either.



Photo by Carol Blackard

Scott and I, though, didn't know the reservoir when it was high. We have known it in only in its more vacant, quieter times. When we visit every summer in August, it is a peaceful place, with campers scarce to rare and boaters far and few between. Papa of the bait shop has downsized and barely hangs on now, but by golly, he's still there. The park is well-maintained and still beautiful despite the shrinking shores and the cottonwood stands around the lake are priceless. Deer are plentiful and this year turkey rafters were proudly parading their poults all over the place. Red-headed woodpeckers by themselves are worth the trip as they are thriving in large numbers and juveniles abound. Although we used to see red-bellied woodpeckers here, their numbers must be way down because we haven't seen one in two years. Other perennials we look for are Warbling Vireos (Bell's are also possible), Eastern Screech Owls, Great-horned Owls, Baltimore, Orchard and Bullock's Orioles, Cedar Waxwings, Kestrels, Swainson's Hawks, Vesper and Lark sparrows, the occasional Grasshopper Sparrow or Lark Bunting, Blue Grosbeaks, Bob Whites (even if they are released Bob Whites), Ring-necked Pheasants, Brown Thrashers, Western Wood Peewees, Turkey Vultures, Robins, Blue Jays, Yellow-

billed Cuckoos, Goldfinches, Yellow Warblers, Mourning and Eurasian-collared Doves, Belted Kingfishers (many fewer in recent years), Downys, Eastern Kingbirds, Wrens, Chickadees, the two Nuthatches, Barn and Tree swallows, Common Night Hawks, with most, if not all these birds finishing out their breeding season right there at Bonny.

Of course, then there are the shorebirds and water birds. Oh, there are usually quite a few, including the usual Great Blue Heron, American White Pelicans with their cute babies, American Avocets, Ibis, Killdeer, a variety of peeps and a few left-over ducks. But getting a close look is impossible. Scott and I fought the good fight again this year, determined to get out close to the shore, dragging our scope, tripod and behemoth camera through the chin-high thistle and cattails until we to our knees in mud and hol-lered "uncle." Why do we do this to ourselves year after year? Anyone with a modicum of sense should be able to tell it's impossible to get down there to the water's edge where the shorebirds hang out! We can't help wishing someone would hack out a trail from the west side and put up a big blind so we could enjoy the birds from a closer vantage point without disturbing them.

But, trials and tribulations aside, we'll go back again next year. Foster Grove Campground calls us. In 1955 Benjamin Foster had a farm close to the water and got "eminent-domained" as the water was rising in the reservoir. I feel bad for him, but I remember him for the beautiful grove of trees he left behind. This lovely man planted more than 150 trees on his farm around his house and most of them are still standing 50 years later, magnificent in their maturity. When we camp there in August and wake up in the balmy summer morning as the only campers in the grove, we are surrounded by giant cottonwoods, mulberries, catalpas, walnut trees, elms, ash trees, locusts, and countless cedars and Russian olives, and we can imagine how you might

Continued on page 8

What's in a name?

Has your backyard feeder ever been visited by a Cooper's Hawk or have you ever been out birding and noted a lack of bird chatter on a hike when you've noticed a grey hawk like bird swoop through?

William C. Cooper (1798 – 1864), a New Yorker was one of the founders of the American Museum of Natural History in New York and the father of another famous Cooper – Dr. James G. Cooper (1830 – 1902) of the Pacific Railroad Survey in California. James was the namesake of the Cooper Ornithological society and for whom a number of birds are named in their scientific names. The younger Cooper was the first to describe the evening grosbeak.

The hawk, along with multiple other birds was named for William. Charles L. Bonaparte (previous article) described and named the hawk for the senior Cooper. The Cooper's flycatcher (aka olive sided) was named by Nuttall and later by Swainson for William. Summer Tanager's alternative name is Cooper's Tanager.

Good birding to all, Niña

August Field Trip Summaries, continued

Aug 29, Saturday *Wheat Ridge Green Belt (WHE)*

Leader(s): Patty Echelmeyer. **Observers:** Nelson Ford, Allie Kinney, Cherryl Lagae, Gretchen and Richard Sheppard, Mason Sieges, Bob Spencer, Mary Zick. **Time:** 0730-1200. **Distance:** 1½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes, riparian, parking lot, elevation 5350'. **Weather:** High clouds, some dark clouds late, 49-60°F. **Totals:** 29 species, 187 individuals.

Highlights: Few birds but fun group. Sad to see WRGB's destruction after 'lineal' tornado. Wood ducks were favorites though no males.

Aug 30, Sunday *Northeastern Colorado, Prewitt and Jackson Reservoirs (NOR)*

Leader(s): Joey Kellner. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Mary Jane Biedenbach, Dan Brooke, Mary Burger, Susan Clasen, Jeff Dawson, John Drummond, Mackenzie Goldthwait, Douglas Kibbe, Linda Knudsen, Walt Knudsen, Mary Ellen Moore, Matt Newport, Chris Owens, Dick Prickett, Joe Roller, Tim Smart, Connie Takamine, Joyce Takamine, Cheryl Teuton. **Time:** 0715-1835. **Distance:** 390 miles by car, 1½ miles on foot. **Weather:** Overcast with occasional sun and calmer in the afternoon, 55-72°F, south wind, 5-15mph. **Totals:** 87 species, 2464 individuals.

Tuesday Birders

Aug 4 *Alderfer Three Sisters Jeffco Open Space Park (ALD)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 26 (two groups). **Time:** 0830-1300. **Distance:** 4 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, aspen woodland and grassy meadows, elevation 7520-7800'. **Weather:** Sunny, calm, 57-80°F, variable wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 28 species, 168 individuals.

Aug 11 *Vail Pass, Shrine Pass and Mt Holy Cross Overlook (VAI)*

Leader(s): Mary Keithler. **Observers:** 20. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 4 miles by car, 2½ on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, pond, willow, pine, aspen and spruce, elevation 10666-11089'. **Weather:** Sunny, 64-70°F, northwest wind, 0-8mph. **Totals:** 10 species, 37 individuals.

Aug 18 *Golden Gate State Park (GOL)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 26. **Time:** 0830-1200. **Distance:** 20 miles by car, 1½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Foothills riparian, montane willow carr, mixed conifer, meadows, elevation 8200-9400'. **Weather:** Partly sunny to cloudy/rainy, 50-61°F, north wind, 0-7mph. **Totals:** 18 species, 72 individuals.

Aug 25 *Upper White Ranch Park (UPP)*

Leader(s): Mary Keithler and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 22 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 1½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine, woodlands and mixed grassy meadows, elevation 5675'. **Weather:** Cloudy to sunny, 64-65°F, south-east wind, 0-6mph. **Totals:** 29 species, 190 individuals.

So Sayeth the Speaker...

John Drummond's Visit to Bolivia DFO Meeting August 24, 2009

Undeterred by barely passable, silt-deficient swinging bridges, frigid 14,000 ft oxygen-deprived elevations, absent or delayed buses, language barrier (verdad) or in one case a momentary lack of binoculars (What were you thinking, Ted Floyd?), John Drummond's troop of seven determined birders trekked doggedly through grasslands, dry, cold highlands (Altiplano), used-to-be cloud forests axed down to barren dirt, stark mountain elevations, and thankfully some still-surviving cloud forests, pristine and beautiful, to seek out and find the birds. When faced with the possibility of not finding a Seepsnipe after driving up to 15,000-ft elevation, these courageous birders spread out and slogged across the cold and misty bog marsh like a pack of bloodhounds, finally uncovering the secretive Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, which turned out, I suppose, to be worth it.

When all tallied, they had an impressive 429 species, among them many lifebirds. They saw Green-cheeked Parakeets, Giant Conebills, Chilean Flamingo, Wood Quail, the Spot-backed Puffbird, Lineated Woodpecker, White-tipped Plantcutter, Bicolored Hawk, Giant Hummingbird, Hooded Mountain-Toucan, Grey-bellied Flower-piercer, the Yungas Pygmy-Owl, and the Blue-crowned Trogon, just to name a few. The Red-fronted Macaw experience was breathtaking as we heard it, with more than 300 of these endemic colonial breeders flying around their cliff homes, flashing their bright red, blue and yellow colors, rewarding purist birders and photographer-birders alike. The news of the thriving cage-trade in this poorly-protected breeding ground was met with quiet groans from the bird lovers in the audience at the Monday night presentation.

Perhaps as striking was what they learned about Bolivia, its geography (two mountain ranges, high arid planes, rainforests and cloud forests), its history (multiple war-time defeats at the hands of neighbors resulting in repeated loss of territory and ocean access) its politics (anti-American), their economy (cocoa leaf and natural gas), its poverty (extreme), its internal struggles (provincial control vs. federal control), its environmental challenges (many), not to mention the infrastructure issues such as the one-way dirt roads which were somehow expected to handle large trucks and busloads of tourists meeting head-on on curvy mountainous and often muddy roads. It was an unexpected gut blow to the audience to learn that lithium needed for Toyota Prius car batteries would soon endanger the high saline lakes in Bolivia which serve as breeding and hanging-out habitat for three species of Flamingos. Yes, Flamingos.

T'was a matchless experience to hear it. You've gotta love a country that almost grounds one's return flight home to the US and warns to "Beware of Rheas" on the airport approach road. If anyone can handle it all, John Drummond can.

As reported by Carol Blackard

Bonnie Lake State Park, continued

have felt out here all alone on your farm, Mr. Foster. We always think of you and thank you Mr. Foster. We remember and honor you for that labor and commitment to trees, shade, beauty, and birds.

Bonny State Park will be closed this winter due to lack of state funds. Foster Campground may be closed also, but not if Bob Shade, park manager at the park, or I have anything to say about it. Granted it is a campground that is underutilized, but the upkeep doesn't cost much and it is a wonderful place for hunters to gather in season and others seeking solitude or birds in their own seasons. If you love Bonny Lake State Park and Foster Grove Campground as I do, please call your state legislator, the Division of Wildlife Director, and make your wishes known. Not that we can stop the dropping of the water level right now, but we can ask for a long-term commitment to this beautiful state park, in the hopes the water level might some day be restored so that trees that depend on a higher water table might be saved and the bird sanctuary out there in the middle of the hot and dry plains might be saved as well.

Carol Blackard

If you would like to share your own perceptions, experiences about Bonny State Park, please send your submission to carol-blackard@comcast.net.



**The English- Speaking Union of Denver
Invites You to Join Us for An Evening
with Jeffery Boswall**



"Answering Calls of Nature: Human Mimicry of Bird Voices."

Jeffery Boswall is a freelance lecturer on wildlife and the environment with a most amusing, entertaining style. He is a wildlife filmmaker, a serious amateur ornithologist and a "populariser" of natural history. Jeffrey's presentation is heavily illustrated with sounds: tape and other recordings, and live instrumental renderings employing blowers, suckers, whistles and pipes, bubblers and scrapers. He's whistled at birds in 70 countries on 7 continents.

His credits include serving as Head of the Film and Video Unit at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and as the longest-serving producer of the BBC Natural History Unit. He is an author and contributor to scientific journals in addition to being a co-author of the encyclopedic Peterson field guide to the Bird Songs of Britain and Europe.

Tuesday October 13, 2009 at the Denver Country Club, promises to be an unusual and entertaining evening. You will want to bring your friends. **Dress is business casual.**

Denver Country Club: 1st Ave. and Gilpin St. Denver
Time: 6:00 pm – 6:30 pm Cash bar via drink ticket for \$7.50
Dinner and speaker: 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Dining room opens at 6:30 pm for dinner

Dinner: Starter of Roasted Tomato Basil Bisque. Entrée of Wild Mushroom Stuffed Chicken Breast with Yukon Gold Potatoes and fall vegetables. Dessert is Blueberry Tart with Vanilla Ice Cream. Rolls and coffee included. Vegetarian entrée upon request.

Cost: \$35.00 per person

Prepayment is required. Please make your reservation by Monday Oct. 5, 2009
Feel free to call Kitty Comstock, ESU Secretary 303-755-1752 with any questions.

RESERVATION FORM FOR THE JEFFERY BOSWALL DINNER

Tuesday Oct. 13, 2009

Denver Country Club

NAME(S) _____ **PHONE:** _____

Guest(s) _____ **Address:** _____

ENTRÉE CHOICE: CHICKEN _____ **VEGETARIAN** _____ **Price: \$35.00/PERSON**

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____ **Send form by October 5, 2009: ESU**

**6790 E. Cedar Ave. #201
Denver, CO 80224-1166**

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

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Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Dick Kolbe, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter—the *Lark Bunting*—sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Treasurer. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair, Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is not mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for publication in the following month's issue. The Editors reserve the right to accept or refuse and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is required.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80232, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net.

Additional Reports

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 1221 E Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dachcook@comcast.net
Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcsisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com.

Our web site, www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check for last minutes trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Denver Field Ornithologists 2010 Membership Application

Please indicate: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

**All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year
if paid after October 1st.**

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00

☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

☐ Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$ _____

With the Rock Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists website.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$ _____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____

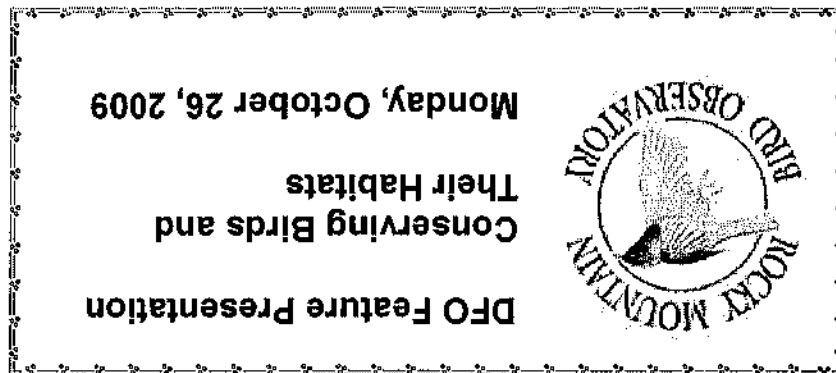
State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting Email address: _____

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742



Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY OCTOBER 2009

SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS										TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL
	3	4	10	11	17	18	24	25	31		6	13	20	27	
LOCATION	CHE	CHA	SAN	SIT	BAR	WAL	ROC	CAR	WHE		BAR	MOU	BEL	ROC	
Say's Phoebe								1				1			2
Gray Jay												1			1
Steller's Jay												8			8
Blue Jay				2	8	1					2		1		14
Black-billed Magpie	6	4		11		2	2	3						2	30
American Crow	19	4		19		3	2					12	7	15	81
Common Raven				5				1				1			7
Horned Lark							6				2				8
Violet-green Swallow												1			1
Cliff Swallow											5				5
Barn Swallow	5			45							100				150
Black-capped Chickadee		11		7	2	12		12			3		1	2	50
Mountain Chickadee												16			16
Red-breasted Nuthatch												2			2
White-breasted Nuthatch		2		2		2	1					12		1	20
Pygmy Nuthatch												31			31
Rock Wren				1											1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet											4				4
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher				1											1
Western Bluebird					5							35			40
Mountain Bluebird				8								28			36
Townsend's Solitaire				2			2					8			12
Hermit Thrush					2										2
American Robin		25		140		21	3	3				1	2	2	197
European Starling	5	15		120	30	100		13			27		2	12	324
American Pipit				50											50
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	1		60	2	3					2				69
"Myrtle" race					1										(1)
"Audubon's" race		1			1						1				(3)
Townsend's Warbler		1													1
Spotted Towhee		2		4											6
American Tree Sparrow								3							3
Chipping Sparrow		5		3	5						2			1	16
Lark Sparrow													1		1
Fox Sparrow															0
Song Sparrow				1	1			6						2	9
Lincoln's Sparrow						1									1
White-throated Sparrow					1										1
White-crowned Sparrow	1	7		3	12			8			6			3	40
Dark-eyed Junco				9	14		6	3			5	13		3	53
"Slate-colored" race					1						1				(2)
"Oregon" race					2								3		(9)
"Pink-sided" race					10										(10)
"Gray-headed" race					1							13			(14)
Red-winged Blackbird	22			100		23	100	15			2	12	12	9	295
Western Meadowlark		11			4						6				21
Brewer's Blackbird				20		1									21
Common Grackle					100			1							101
House Finch	27	8		15	2	1	6	2			10		8	12	87
Red Crossbill												22			22
Pine Siskin				1								41			42
Lesser Goldfinch				9											9
American Goldfinch				1	12						6			6	25
House Sparrow					2			2			20				24
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	814	672	6	2561	1011	598	441	223	0		896	268	327	801	8,802
TOTAL SPECIES	35	32	0	71	51	34	37	37	0		44	24	28	41	110
OBSERVATION LEGEND:	a=adult, i=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only, c=calling, s=singing, boldface=rare/unusual, +=also/in addition to, x=individual data incomplete/not enumerated														

Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)
 Chatfield State Park (CHA)
 Sand Creek Park (SAN)
 Barr Lake State Park (BAR)
 Walden Ponds (WAL)
 Rocky Mountain Arsenal (ROC)

Carson Nature Center, S Platte Park (CAR)
 Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)
 Barr Lake State Park (BAR)
 Mount Falcon Jeffco Open Space Park (MOU)
 Belmar Historic Park (BEL)



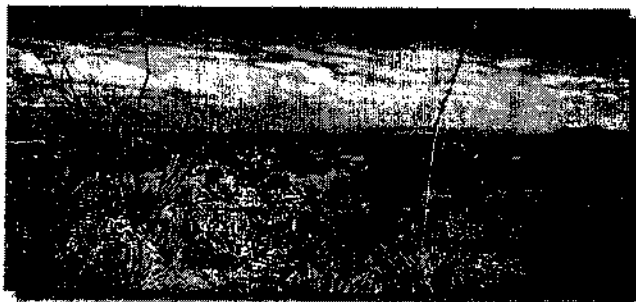
Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

NOVEMBER 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44, Number 11



The Chihuahuan Desert: Critical Winter Habitat for Colorado Birds Monday, November 23, 2009

As the last plaintive notes of bugling elk echo through mountain valleys, and November snow squalls threaten to blanket the streets and lawns of Denver, Greg Levandoski, a research biologist for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) will "transport" us south into the

vastness of the Chihuahuan desert. The Chihuahuan desert is one of North America's four major deserts and spreads across 200,000 sparsely populated square miles from Albuquerque, New Mexico, 750 miles south into the Mexican state of Zacatecas. In Mexico this region lies between the Sierra Madre Occidental in the west and the Sierra Madre Oriental in the east. In the US it encompasses the southeastern corner of Arizona, a portion of southern New Mexico, and a region of west Texas including the amazing Big Bend National Park. It is a relatively high desert rising from 1,900 ft. to 5,500 ft. above sea level.

Continued on page 3

November Field Trips



Sunday, November 1 *Scoter Trip*

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748. This is an all day trip driving to various mountain lakes to look for scoters, loons and other migrants, so bring lunch. Trip will probably include stops at Dillon Reservoir, Turquoise Lake, Spinney Mountain Reservoir, Twin Lakes and Eleven-Mile Reservoir.

Call leader to register and arrange a meeting place. State Parks pass required.

Saturday, November 7 *Chatfield State Park*

Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035. Meet leader at 0800 at the Swim Beach Parking Lot inside west entrance of park off S. Wadsworth, 1 1/2 miles south of C-470. State Parks Pass required. This may be a half to three quarter day trip depending on birds and weather, so bring lunch and drinking water.

Sunday, November 8 *Castlewood Canyon State Park and Kingerys' bird feeders*

Leaders: Hugh and Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723. Meet leaders at 0800 on the side of the road at Colo. 86 & Castlewood Canyon Road (Douglas Co. road 51); just west of Cherry Creek; DO NOT go to Park headquarters, 5 miles south of Franktown on Colo. 83. DO NOT go into the park on Castlewood Canyon Road. The intersection is: (a) 1/2 mile west of traffic light in Franktown; and (b) 10 miles east of I-25, Exit 184

For (a): Take Parker Road/Colo. 83 to Franktown (about 10 miles south of Parker); right at traffic light. Left on Castlewood Canyon Road (just after you cross Cherry Creek).

For (b): Turn left at Exit 184 on Founders Parkway (now Colo. 86) and go 4 miles to traffic light. Left 4.5 miles to Castlewood Canyon Road; right on Castlewood Canyon Road. The Park portion will involve a two mile walk or so,

November Field Trips, continued

depending on the birds and the group. We may hike another Open Space unit depending on trail conditions and birds. Bring lunch and your state parks pass. This trip is especially good for the novice birder and new members.

Saturday, November 14 *Belmar Historic Park*

Leader: Karleen Schofield, 303-936-8661. Meet leader at 0900 at 800 South Wadsworth Blvd. at W. Ohio Ave. Turn west on Ohio Ave, and go 2 blocks straight ahead into Irongate parking lot and to lake. This will be a half day trip ending at 1200.

Sunday, November 15 *Roxborough State Park*

Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072. Meet leader at the Visitor Center at 0800. Trip will finish by noon. This trip should see the resident golden eagles, scrub jays and possibly a canyon wren or two. Mammals are also possible, elk, deer and possibly more. State Parks Pass required or \$5 entrance fee per car. Lunch is optional but there are places to enjoy your lunch after the hike. Take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield S.P. to Waterton Rd on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles)

Saturday, November 21 *Walk Along the Platte*

Leader: Sue Shulman, 303-773-3540. Meet leader at the Park-n-Ride parking lot near the Carson Nature Center. Take Santa Fe to Mineral and turn west into the Parking lot for the RTD Park-n-Ride. **DO NOT PARK AT THE NATURE CENTER!!!!** Trip may go to other ponds to look for more birds so bring lunch and drinking water. Please contact leader to verify the exact meeting place.

Sunday, November 22 *Longmont Area*

Leader: Chris Owens, 303-772-6048. Meet leader at 0800 at Jim Hamm Nature Center – From I-25 take exit 240. Go west 4 miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld Co. Line Road, then 2 miles north to park on left at E. 17th Ave. Bring lunch and water as trip will end around 1 or 2 pm depending on weather and birds. State Parks Pass may be needed.

Friday, November 27 *Platte River Greenway*

Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. Meet leader at 8:30 at E. 88th and the South Platte River – From I-76 take E. 88th Ave. exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead. Explore along the river on the bike path which is paved and level. Bring lunch and drinking water. Please call leader if going in case weather is bad.

Saturday, November 28 *Pueblo*

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Saunders, 303-278-7172. Meet leaders at 0630 at the Safeway on Lincoln just West of I-25. Bring lunch, extra drinking water and come prepared for extremes of weather. State Parks pass needed.

Sunday, November 29 *Rigli Ranch*

Leader: Joe Rigli, 970-768-7121. Meet leader at 0900 at the ranch. From Denver, take East I-76 to Hudson, Exit 31 (C 52). Go east on C 52 for approx. 32 miles until it turns north, do NOT turn north but continue east on Morgan County Rd. F for another 14 miles to CR 14. Turn left (north) on CR 14 and go about 2 miles to the first white house on the left (with 2 boxcars). Bring lunch and drinking water. Help Joe locate those birds wintering on the plains and raptors.

Welcome New Members!

Bob Andrews, 56220 E 37th Ct, Strasburg CO 80136, 303.249.5220

Becca & Terry Hammons, 5670 S Hillside St, Greenwood Village, Co 80111 303.267.0163

Mary Ellen Moore, 2416 Elite Terrace, Colorado Springs, Co 80920 719.528.8052

Contribution to Colorado Rare Bird Alert: Mary Ellen Moore

Thank you.

The Chihuahuan Desert, continued

The Chihuahuan desert is known as a shrub desert which includes vast regions of creosote bush, mesquite, yucca and agave, areas of prickly-pear cactus and Mormon tea, acacias and ocotillo, and significant areas of grassland.

We have all heard stories of scorpions, tarantulas, sidewinders and Gila monsters, of ocelots and javelina. And there are the roadrunners, scaled quail (their range matches the desert's range to a very large degree), cactus wrens, elf owls, pyrrhuloxia, and painted buntings. But what of the burrowing owls, the mountain bluebirds, Cassin's kingbirds, and the white-winged doves?

Many of Colorado's birds, along with birds from across the Great Plains, migrate south to their wintering grounds in the Chihuahuan desert. Grassland birds are experiencing widespread population declines and are considered the most threatened group of birds in North America. These species face many threats which are tied to habitat loss, environmental changes, political whims, and economics. Greg will explain how he, RMBO, and many Mexican partners are working to better understand the needs of these birds and to find potential solutions for conserving these threatened populations.

Greg has worked on a wide variety of research projects ranging from monitoring nesting alcids in the Bering Sea, to counting migrating raptors along ridge lines in the West, to chasing warblers through Caribbean thorn forests. His search for a broad understanding of avian conservation needs has led Greg to work in 15 U. S. states (10 western), 3 Mexican states, and Jamaica. Join DFO to hear about Greg's work in the grasslands of the Chihuahuan desert of northern Mexico and gain a better understanding of the distribution and abundance of a part of North America's wintering bird populations.

NO DFO meeting in December, please plan to participate in the Denver Christmas Count and/or one of the many other Christmas Counts around the state!

January 25, 2010: the always popular Bill Schmoker, Colorado Field Ornithologists president, teacher, and accomplished wildlife photographer will present us with a program which will "lift you out of the mid-winter doldrums!"



RMBO: Conserving Birds and Their Habitats Monday, October 26, 2009 at 7.30pm

Longtime Karval, CO, rancher Russell Davis was skeptical when his son attempted to persuade him to attend a workshop on bird conservation presented by the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) in partnership, and with funds provided by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW). It was already hot that spring of 2002, and Davis had plenty of work to do on the ranch. The last thing he needed was a bunch of environmentalists telling him how to run the family ranch. Davis's son was persuasive, however, and Russell was one of many landowners who gathered around a hay wagon that served as a stage for RMBO's Tammy VerCauteren and representatives of CDOW, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other partners.

Check out RMBO online at www.rmbo.org and come to the October meeting prepared to test your knowledge of Colorado and regional birds. There will be fun and interactive quizzes on bird identification along with information about RMBO and its important contributions to bird conservation.

The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the museum and walk around and enter through the museum's west door. Plan to arrive by 7:15 p.m.; DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30 P.M. If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer door, but this creates problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

What birds to look for in November and where to look for them...

DFO Birders,

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for in the current month and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In November, the average high in Denver is 53 degrees and the average low is 25 degrees, down 13 degrees on the high and 11 degrees on the low from October, although it has reached 79 degrees and has fallen to -8 degrees though Alamosa has fallen to -30 degrees. Average snow fall for Denver in November is 8.2" but 39.1" has fallen during the month.

Bald Eagles start arriving in numbers at locales like Barr Lake in Adams County, Marston Reservoir in Denver County and the Colorado River on the western slope. Look for Short-eared Owls on fence posts and floating over fields like a big moth at and near the Wellington State Wildlife Area east of Wellington on Larimer County Road 64 and Lower Latham Reservoir near La Salle in Weld County. Don't rule out finding these owls at other places in Colorado as I had one in the foothills west of our house in Golden in January 2004 and January 2006. Also look for them in the southwestern valleys of the state. Be careful not to confuse Northern Harriers (whose numbers increase this time of year) with the owls as they both hunt in similar habitat. Look for both at the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge near Alamosa.

Rough-legged Hawks are generally the last to arrive to winter in our state to hunt over wetlands and grasslands looking for mice and voles. They are a little smaller than the ferruginous hawks that hang out around prairie dog towns looking for a meal. A good place to look for these raptors as well as Merlins, are the plains in and east of the Pawnee National Grasslands. Pay special attention to the

power line structures and you will probably find a Prairie Falcon among the many other raptors. While you are there, watch for flocks of Horned Larks which may contain Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings.

Pinyon Jays and Clark's Nutcrackers roam many square miles between 5000' and 9000' in elevation searching for pinon pines with a good nut crop that they cache for the winter. Nutcrackers can cache 30,000 seeds. Places with good stands of pinon pine include: Dinosaur National Monument, north of Rangely; Colorado National Monument, near Grand Junction; Mesa Verde National Park; Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument, near Montrose; State Highway 115 between Colorado Springs and Canon City; and Owl Canyon, northwest of Ft. Collins.

As many as six different species of geese arrive in November. Large numbers of Canada and Cackling Geese can be found in many places in the state. A good place to study Cackling Geese (recently split from Canada Goose) is Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Golden. Hundreds of these small geese, some as small as Mallards, can be found there in the winter. Barr Lake hosts thousands of "white-cheeked" geese at this time of year, and mixed in are quite a few Snow Geese and some Ross's Geese. The challenge is to pick out Greater White-fronted Geese and maybe a Brant. I've never seen a Brant at Barr Lake, but they have been found at Union Reservoir in western Weld County, Long Lake in Larimer County, Utah Park in Arapahoe County, Pueblo Reservoir in Pueblo County and Inverness Business Park in Douglas County. At the larger lakes, you will need a scope.

The South Platte River is very attractive to waterfowl when the weather gets cold and lakes and ponds start to freeze. The stretch of river between 88th and 74th is excellent for waterfowl in general including Barrow's Goldeneye and perhaps a Long-tailed Duck though the chance of seeing these birds on the river increases in December and later in the winter.



Northern Harrier
Photo by Walter Ammann

Continued on next page

November Birds, continued

Until the mountain reservoirs I mentioned in October freeze over, they are still great places for loons and scoters. Be sure to watch for Red-necked Grebes in these reservoirs and especially at Pueblo Reservoir where they show up with regularity. Also from last month, November is the prime time for Ancient and Long-billed Murrelets in Colorado. Keep your eyes open for these rare small bouncing corks anywhere in the state.

The last of the shorebirds come through (Dowitchers, Black-bellied and American Golden Plovers, Sanderlings, Least Sandpipers) with a chance for some "rare" species such as Dunlin. A Dunlin was in the South Platte River just downstream from Chatfield Reservoir just last winter and stayed from December through at least January.

Gulls become more abundant with more rare and unusual species showing up. Iceland Gulls have become annual along with Glaucous, Lesser Black-backed and Great Black-backed Gulls. For almost 20 years, there has been at least 1 Great Black-backed Gull at Pueblo Reservoir. I remember when Lesser Black-backed Gulls were rare and the first state record Iceland Gull was found in Pueblo in January 1999. Now, the former can be found almost anywhere along the Front Range and the latter in several places each winter. Watch for Little Gull and Black-legged Kittiwake in all the places that gulls gather. Bonaparte's Gulls show up in numbers at Pueblo Reservoir and other lakes in the state.

Some passerines are at their peak in November. Migrant White-crowned and White-throated Sparrows can be found in brushy areas and Harris's Sparrows can be found in places like the Arkansas River Walks in Pueblo and Canon City. Winter Wrens and the occasional Rusty Blackbird may also appear. Townsend's Solitaires, though they aren't that solitary this time of year, appear on the plains and in the foothills. Look for them around groups of junipers and other conifers. Red Rocks Park, Chatfield State Park, Crow Valley Campground and various hedgerows on the plains are good places to look.

I would like to thank Norm Lewis and Joey Kellner for their contributions to this month's column. If you have suggestions for any months yet to come for anywhere in the state, please feel free to email them to me at: greatauk@msn.com. All suggestions and contributions are gratefully accepted.

Ira Sanders

For the Birds

In Southern Texas, the Penascal Wind Farm sits in the midst of one of North America's primary waterfowl migration flyways. During migration season, birds cross the sky above the spinning turbines at a rate of up to 4,000 an hour. To reduce collisions between geese and giant rotating blades, the company employs radar-based sensors to scan the skies for approaching birds. The technology, developed for NASA, can detect a migrating flock from up to four miles away, pinpointing its altitude as well as its density. If the birds are headed for trouble, the turbines are shut down.

...Sophie Lubin

From On Earth, published by the Natural Resources Defense Council

Sent to the Lark Bunting by Carol Blackard.

2009 Fall Count Summary

The 22nd Fall count produced a less than stellar 159 species – well below the 173 of last year and two other years, but exactly the average. The number of individuals fell 2,500 birds below the 22-year average.

Notable observations included:

272 **Western Grebes**, 2nd only to the 323 seen in 2000;

Snowy Egrets have increased noticeably over our 22 years of counting: we saw 1-11 from 1987 to 2004 (except for 25 in 1991); we've counted 27-35 in the last five years;

Twice as many **Sparrows** as the average of 589, aided and abetted by 174 **Lark Buntings** (highest ever) and 597 **Vesper Sparrows**; Only one **Common Grackle** (average 211; their numbers have dropped since 1997).

All eight parties saw nine species: Mallard, Great Blue Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Northern Flicker, American Robin, Vesper and Lark sparrows, and House Finch. The only new species, **Red-throated Loon**, showed up at Bear Creek Lake Park.

September 12, Saturday *Waterton (WAT)*

Leader: Urling Kingery. **Observers:** Kathy Bolthoeffer, Merikay Haggerty, Christie Honnen, Sue Schulman.

Time: 0630-1530. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, grassland, wetlands, open water.

Weather: Cloudy, rain in afternoon. **Totals:** 47 species, 579 individuals

Highlights: Wood Ducks in Russian Olive trees eating olive berries. Dearth of warblers.

September 12, Saturday *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Bob Brown. **Observers:** LeaAnn Brown, Pauline Ide, Mary Keithler, Allie Kinney, Ted Pinkert,

Mason Sieges. **Time:** 0700-1300. **Distance:** 13 miles by car, 5½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Mixed riparian, open

water, elevation 5567'. **Weather:** Overcast, 54-60°F, variable wind, 10mph. **Totals:** 61 species, 632 individuals.

September 12, Saturday *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Joey Kellner. **Observers:** Jill Holden, Ed Holub, Loch Kilpatrick, Charlie Lawrence, Randy Lentz,

Steve Stachowiak, Glenn Walbek, Kim Zoetewey. **Time:** 0615-1800. **Distance:** 32 miles by car, 5 miles on foot.

Weather: Mostly cloudy, overcast with rain in late afternoon, 47-63°F, north wind, 0-12mph. **Totals:** 86 species, 1474 individuals.

September 12, Saturday *Barr Lake Periphery (BLP)*

Leader(s): Jackie King. **Time:** 0700-1300. **Distance:** 57 miles by car. **Habitat:** Riparian, plains and developed

city or suburb, elevation 5280'. **Weather:** Cloudy, drizzle all day, 52-59°F, northwest wind am, 0-5mph, still pm.

Totals: 53 species, 1597 individuals.

September 12, Saturday *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Dick Schottler. **Observers:** David Alcock, Kathy Mihm-Dunning, Warren Finch, Dick Pratt. **Time:**

0630-1600. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 9 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Man-made reservoir with associated riparian.

Weather: Overcast, occasional light showers, 48-57°F, north wind, 0-10mph. **Totals:** 84 species, 2522 individuals.

September 12, Saturday *Lower Bear Creek (LOW)*

Leader(s): Bob Andrews. **Observers:** Rick Creswell, Tina Jones, Michael Kiessig, Rob Raker, Bob Righter, Barbara Shissler, Tim Smart, Cindy Valentine. **Time:** 0700-1630. **Distance:** 4 miles by car, 9 miles on foot.

Habitat: Riparian woods, grasslands, shrublands, lake, elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Overcast, rain developing from 1600, 55-60°F, west wind, 10-15mph. **Totals:** 82 species, 2834 individuals.

Continued on next page

2009 Fall Count, continued

September 13, Sunday

Castlewood Canyon State Park (CAS)

Leader(s): Randy Lentz. **Observers:** Bev DuGay, Laurie Duke, Melissa Smith, Peggy Waite. **Time:** 0600-1600. **Distance:** 20 miles by car, 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, gambel oak, riparian, grassland, elevation 6300'. **Weather:** Overcast early, sunny midday, 45-64°F, south wind, 5-20mph. **Totals:** 40 species, 780 individuals.

September 13, Sunday

Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR (ROC)

Leader: Urling Kingery. **Observers:** Patty Echelmeyer, Von Fransen, Mackenzie Goldthwait, Alison Kondler, Lois Levinson, Ann McGraw, Marilyn Rhodes, Anne Tatlow. **Time:** 0630-1630. **Distance:** 4 miles on foot, 10 miles by car. **Habitat:** Riparian, grassland, open waters. **Weather:** Cloudy. **Totals:** 92 species, 2331 individuals

Highlights: Rock Wrens everywhere: rock piles, mullein bridge railings, brush piles; a solid phalanx of Barns Swallows, and a few Yellow-headed Blackbirds, perched along the sand bar that pokes in Lower Derby Lake; stripey juvenile Pied-billed Grebes; Poorwills at the Homestead flushing up again and again; 3 species of kingbirds – Cassin's and Western perched together; Red-necked Phalaropes; warblers and juncos mixed together; black locust thickets grown so thick we couldn't get in them to look for Long-eared Owls.

Additional Reports, August & September 2009

Species	Date	# Seen	Location	County	Observers
Cormorant, red-faced	8/13	1	Wheat Ridge greenbelt, Bass Lake	Jefferson	Robert Spencer
Sandpiper, buff-breasted	8/30	1	Cherry Creek State Park	Arapahoe	Bob Brown, et al.
Night-Heron, yellow-crowned	9/4	1 imm.	Jumbo Reservoir	Logan	Joey Kellner, Kathy Mihm
Sandpiper, buff-breasted	9/7	1 juv.	Jumbo Reservoir	Logan	Allison Hilf, Joey Kellner,
Dowitcher, short-billed	9/7	2 juv.	Jumbo Reservoir	Logan	Allison Hilf, Joey Kellner, Steve Larson, Randy
Owl, Barn	9/20	1	Last Chance, CO	Washington	Joey Kellner, Steve Larson, Kathy Mihm Dunning, Joe
Warbler, Tennessee	9/11	1 first fall	Crow Valley Campground	Weld	Joey Kellner, Connie
Warbler, Nashville	9/7	1	Crow Valley Campground	Weld	Allison Hilf, Joey Kellner,

Please send your reports to Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 1221 E Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.



For birders who travel

To find a Not-paid guide and local information, check out www.BirdingPal.com

To find locations to bird, see www.Birding.com/wheretobird.asp

Field Trip Summaries, September 2009

Sep 5, Saturday *McClintock and Enchanted Mesa Trails (McC)*

Leader(s): Paul Slingsby. **Observers:** Diane Carter, Susan Clasen, Jean Frazier, Tony Rautus, Tim Smart. **Time:** 0800-1430. **Distance:** 70 miles by car, 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, douglas fir/ponderosa, pond. **Weather:** Sunny, 80°F, very low wind. **Totals:** 45 species, 221 individuals. **Highlights:** The Hooded Warbler was the high point of the trip. It was the third species seen in McClintock Canyon, and it followed us up the canyon for ¼ mile. All got good looks, but brief.

Sep 6, Sunday *Chico Basin Ranch, El Paso & Pueblo Counties (CHI)*

Leader(s): Drummond and Percival. **Observers:** Israel, Mitchell, Shire, Moore, Yonder, Metzger, Clasen (2), Montgomery (2), Kondler, O'Neill, Anderson, Hanney, Lawrence, Jenner. **Time:** 0810-1400. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Short grass prairie, marsh, lowland cottonwood riparian, ponds. **Weather:** Sunny, overcast later, 56-85°F, south wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 67 species, 453 individuals.

Sep 19, Saturday *Rocky Mountain National Park (ROC)*

Leader(s): Chris Owens. **Observers:** Meredith Anderson, Robert and Jackie Heyda, Nathan Kuhnert, Marcia Milliken, Bonnie Mulvany, Jim Petri, Bob Shade, Tim Smart, Bob Spencer. **Time:** 0800-1345. **Distance:** 17 miles by car, 1½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa forest, riparian, mountain meadows, elevation 8500'. **Weather:** Clear, 5mph wind. **Totals:** 32 species, 128 individuals.

Sep 20, Sunday *Prewitt Reservoir and the Eastern Plains (PRE)*

Leader(s): Bill Schmoker. **Observers:** Tim Smart, Mike Wilson, Barb Nabors, Matt Newport, Doug Kibbe, Mackenzie Goldthwait, Debbie Barnes, Mary Ellen Moore, John Drummond, Betsy Shaw, Alison Kondler, Kelly Shipe, Genie Mitchell, Joe Brummer, Lori Brummer, Mark Miller. **Time:** 0700. **Totals:** 67 species, 1288 individuals.

Sep 26, Saturday *Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA)*

Leader(s): Dave Rhoades. **Observers:** Lynda Broerern, Diane Carter, Patty Echelmeyer, Gail Evans, Pauline Ide, Alistair Montgomery, Barb Montgomery, Patti O'Neill, Tim Smart. **Time:** 0800-1300. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes, prairie, elevation 5250'. **Weather:** Clear, 50-80°F, north wind. **Totals:** 54 species, 765 individuals.

Sep 27, Sunday *Lyons Area (LYO)* No report available at time of printing.

Tuesday Birders

Sep 1 *O'Fallon Park, Denver Mountain Parks (OFA)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 42 (two groups). **Time:** 0830-1200. **Distance:** 3½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponderosa pine, open woodland, riparian, mixed conifers, aspen, elevation 6800-7200'. **Weather:** Calm, hazy, 62-80°F, no wind. **Totals:** 31 species, 180 individuals.

Sep 8 *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 26. **Time:** 0830-1200. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, riparian/cottonwood, wetlands, grasslands, elevation 5550'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 70-83°F, calm, east wind, 0-7mph. **Totals:** 36 species, 254 individuals.

Sep 15 *Lair O'the Bear Jeffco Open Space Park (LAI)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 25 (two groups). **Time:** 0830-1200. **Distance:** 3½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, some ponderosa pine and blue spruce, elevation 6350'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 64-75°F, calm. **Totals:** 25 species, 97 individuals.

Sep 15 *Chico Basin Ranch and Pueblo (CHI)*

Leader(s): Brandon Percival. **Observers:** 19. **Time:** 0745-1800. **Distance:** 71 miles by car, 2½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, some open water, cholla fields, elevation 4900-5100'. **Weather:** Sunny, calm, 55-83°F. **Totals:** 50 species, 451 individuals.

Sep 22 Cancelled due to weather.

Sep 29 *Lair O'the Bear Jeffco Open Space Park (LAI)*

Leader(s): Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 10. **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 1½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, some ponderosa pine and blue spruce, elevation 6350'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 46-70°F, calm. **Totals:** 17 species, 34 individuals.

Sep 29 *Kenosha Pass and Campground (KEN)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 22. **Time:** 0930-1200. **Distance:** 4½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Ponds, ponderosa pine, spruce, Douglas fir, aspen woodlands, grassy meadows, elevation 10000-10400'. **Weather:** Sunny, calm, 45-65°F, wind 0-7mph. **Totals:** 19 species, 76 individuals.

What's in a name?



Cassin's Kingbird
Photo by Carol Blackard

As I look out from a deck in Grand Lake (courtesy of good & generous friends) I'm seeing chubby, stripey finches looking for food at empty feeders (bears in the area explain the lack of feeder food, at least until hibernation).

Cassin's is the finch and many other birds including Auklet, Dove, Jay, and Kingbird are named after John Cassin (1813 – 1869). Mr. Cassin is considered "one of the giants of American Ornithology". He was the unpaid curator of Ornithology at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia and a Quaker businessman in his spare time. A world traveler, he described 198 species of birds. Mr. Cassin was the official ornithologist on Admiral Perry's historic voyage.

Actually Baird named and described the Cassin's finch and Swainson named the Kingbird after Cassin. These gentlemen obviously shared an admiration and respect for John Cassin.

Good birding to all, Nifia Routh

Denver Post - Hazards of Birding

A **MUST READ** for DFO Birders!

Sent to the Lark Bunting by Chris Blakeslee

When traveling in Colorado's National forests there are a variety of hazards that may be encountered by enthusiastic birders. Over and above bumpy roads and fallen trees, in the fall there are hunters, all year round there may be recreational target shooting, and here is a big new one!

Thursday, August 27th, on the front page of The Denver Post was a headline and article about "international drug cartels infiltrating national forests" in Colorado. This has been reported from Hawaii, California, and the Pacific Northwest for years, but until now not in Colorado on a large scale. **BIRDERS SHOULD READ THIS ARTICLE AND BE AWARE!** I have been following the nesting of Lewis's Woodpeckers and Red-headed Woodpeckers in the Cheesman/northern Hayman Burn Area for three seasons. The two major marijuana growing sites (one the size of a football field) mentioned in the article are located within three to four air miles of these woodpecker sites.

These illegal marijuana growers **ARE** armed! BBA II Atlasers should be particularly aware since they can often get farther off the "beaten path" than other birders.

Please look up this article. It offers advice on what signs to look for and on what to do and not to do.

http://www.denverpost.com/search/ci_13212051

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The *Lark Bunting* has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists, Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard., Denver, CO 80205. The Denver Field Ornithologists was organized as the Colorado Bird Club in 1935, and membership is open to anyone interested in the birds of the Denver area in particular, and the birds of Colorado in general. The DFO presents monthly evening programs (except in the summer and month of December) and conducts about 100 field trips annually.

Regular individual or family membership is \$30.00 per year (\$20 per year if you choose to have the newsletter—the *Lark Bunting*—sent by email). Student (age 21 or younger) membership is \$5.00 per year. Applications for membership should be sent to the Treasurer. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership Chair, Mary Burger. A membership application form is on the next page of this newsletter. The *Lark Bunting* is not mailed first class.

Notices or announcements of classes, lectures, special field trips, etc., relating to birds that are intended for inclusion in the *Lark Bunting* should be sent to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for publication in the following month's issue. The Editors reserve the right to accept or refuse and to edit any announcement. The *Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

Scheduling and compiling the information for monthly publication is a complex and time-consuming effort, therefore the responsibilities are shared by many dedicated volunteers. First day of the month is the deadline for all submittals. Email is required.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80232, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net.

Additional Reports

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 1221 E Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dacobcook@comcast.net
Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com.

Our web site, www.dfobirders.org lists current field trip schedules that you can download. Changes to trip schedules will be posted on the site, and noted on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750. We encourage members to routinely check for last minutes trip changes or cancellations.

Membership Information

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Denver Field Ornithologists 2010 Membership Application

Please indicate: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

**All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year
if paid after October 1st.**

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00

☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

☐ Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$_____

With the Rock Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists website.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting Email address: _____

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
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Englewood, CO 80111-5742



DFO Feature Presentations

**Conserving Birds and
Their Habitats**

Monday, October 26, 2009

**The Chihuahuan Desert:
Critical Winter Habitat for Colorado Birds**

Monday, November 23, 2009

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE NOVEMBER 2009

SPECIES	DFO FIELD TRIPS											TUESDAY BIRDERS				TOTAL
	1	7	8	14	15	21	22	27	28	29		3	10	17	24	
LOCATION	SCO	CHA	CAS	BEL	ROX	WAL	LON	PLA	PUE	RIC		SOU	WAT	CHA	CHE	
Rock Pigeon	2		2	8		4	25		35				18	4		87
Eurasian Collared-dove				1			8		9							18
White-winged Dove									2							2
Mourning Dove		4							2							6
Barn Owl									2							2
Great Horned Owl						1				3						4
Rufous Hummingbird																0
Belted Kingfisher	1	1	1	1		3	1		1			3	2	2	1	17
Downy Woodpecker		2	5	1								2			1	11
Hairy Woodpecker		1	1						1							3
Northern Flicker		3	3	2		4	5		8	2		4	8	8	6	51
"Red-shafted" race		(3)		(2)						(2)						(7)
Buff-breasted Flycatcher																0
Black Phoebe									1							1
Northern Shrike	1												1			2
Stellar's Jay	5		11													16
Blue Jay			10						1					1		12
Western Scrub-Jay			6										1			7
Clark's Nutcracker	1															1
Black-billed Magpie	2	8	8			2	3		6	5		4	2	18	16	89
American Crow	80	4		5		3	5		21				21	43	17	179
Common Raven	10		4	1					1				3			19
Horned Lark	50						250		22	40				7		366
Black-capped Chickadee		7	8	3		4			3			2	3		2	32
Mountain Chickadee	15		8	1												22
Junco Titmouse									2							2
Red-breasted Nuthatch			4													4
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	1	5						1						1	10
Pygmy Nuthatch	2		10													12
Brown Creeper	1								1				2			4
Rock Wren									1							1
Canyon Wren													3			3
American Dipper													2			2
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1															1
Townsend's Solitaire			7						3				4			14
American Robin		3	4	1					2				2	2	30	44
European Starling	9	25	14			50	1000		1	8		5	6	19	52	1189
American Pipit		1														1
Spotted Towhee		1	8										1			11
Canyon Towhee									4							4
American Tree Sparrow		12	6			4				30			2	3	4	61
Fox Sparrow																0
Song Sparrow		2		1		2	1		2			2	3	2		15
White-throated Sparrow													1			1
White-crowned Sparrow						4	1		5			1	3	1		15
"Gambel's" race						4										(4)
Dark-eyed Junco	9	14	10	1		2			44	1			8	13		102
"State-colored" race						(2)								(3)		(6)
"Oregon" race	5									1						(6)
"Pink-sided" race		(5)											6	(9)		(16)
"Gray-headed" race	2	(1)														(3)
Red-winged Blackbird	2			1			20		50	1		12				89
Western Meadowlark	1	1													2	4
Brewer's Blackbird							1									1
Common Grackle							1									1
Great-tailed Grackle							3									3
House Finch		35	2	19		6			14			6	8	6	30	127
Pine Siskin			125													125
American Goldfinch		5	6						3			3	1	3		21
House Sparrow	8			5		12			15			10				50
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	8718	789	548	348	0	389	2536	0	2275	101		434	107	521	715	17,481
TOTAL SPECIES	51	43	35	29	0	34	42	0	84	15		38	26	37	33	112

OBSERVATION LEGEND:

a=adult, i=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only, e=egg(s), e+h=egg(s) + heard only, boldface=rare/unusual, + =also in addition to, x=individual data incomplete/not enumerated

Sooty Trip (SCO)

Pueblo (PUE)

Chaffield State Park (CHA)

Rigli Ranch (RIG)

Castlewood Canyon State Park (CAS)

South Platte Park/Carson Nature Center (SOU)

Belmar Historic Park (BEL)

Waterton Canyon (WAT)

Roxborough State Park (ROX)

Chaffield Park (CHA)

Walk Along the Platte (WAL)

Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)

Longmont Area (LON)



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting



DECEMBER 2009

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 44, Number 12



December Field Trips

Saturday, December 5

Deer Creek Canyon

Leader: Lynn Willcockson, (303)757-7000. Meet Leader at 0800 at the entrance to the Arboretum on Deer Creek Canyon Rd. about a quarter-mile west of Wadsworth Blvd. We'll visit the Arboretum and the Park looking for the hardy birds of winter; Canyon Wren a likely find. Half-day trip, lunch optional. Please call Leader to let him know if you plan to attend.

Sunday, December 6

Barr Lake and Roads East

Leaders: Tim Smart, (303)439-9627 and Meredith Anderson, (303)280-8576. Meet Leaders at 0830 at the Barr Lake Visitors' Center parking lot. We'll canvass the Lake area for wintering waterfowl and riparian birds, and then drive the county roads east for raptors. Bring lunch, a scope and two-way radios if you have them. Trip should wrap up by 2 pm. State Parks Pass or fee required. Please notify Meredith if you plan to participate.

Saturday, December 12

Fort Collins Lakes

Leader: Paul Slingsby, (303)422-3728. Meet Leader at 0800 at the Big Dry Creek Park parking lot: from I-25 exit 223 (120th Ave.) Travel west on 120th Ave. about 0.5 mi. to Huron St. Turn right (north) on Huron and proceed north to 128th Ave; turn left (west) on 128th Ave. and look for the Park entrance about 0.2 mi. on your left (you will see a rather large circular fenced-in dog run before the entrance). From there we will carpool and head north to the Loveland-Fort Collins area stopping at various lakes for wintering waterfowl, Bald Eagles and other raptors, gulls, and that ever-possible rarity. We'll eat lunch someplace warm, so you can either bring a lunch or buy one at a local grocery. We should be back in the Metro area before rush-hour. Bring a scope, and radios if you have them, and please notify Paul if you plan to attend.

Sunday, December 13

Jackson Lake and Prewitt Reservoir

Leader: Norm Erthal, (303)917-2596, nerthal@comcast.net. Meet Leader at 0700 at the DOW office at 6060 N. Broadway: I-25 to 58th Ave., west a short distance to Broadway and north a couple of blocks to the DOW parking lot on the right. We'll be looking for ducks, grebes, loons, Long-eared Owls, raptors, gulls, and all else. Full-day trip, some moderate walking; bring lunch, warm clothing and footwear, scopes, radios, and plenty of water. State Parks Pass or fee required. Please notify Leader if you plan to attend.

Saturday, December 19

Denver's Christmas Bird Count! See next page for details.

Sunday, December 20

Parker Regional Park, East Bank

Leader: Mary Cay Burger, (303)771-343. Meet Leader at 0830 at the parking lot at the Park entrance, on the right of Parker Road about a mile south of Main Street in Parker. We'll do about a mile or two of easy walking through plains, ponds and woods; we should see a nice variety of birds. This is a 3/4 day trip; bring lunch, and be prepared for "anything goes" weather!

Saturday, December 26

Allenspark, Foothills and the Fawnbrook Inn

Leaders: Mike Serruto, (303)377-9870 and Niina Routh, (303)987-8687. Meet Leaders at 0800 at the Wagon Road Park 'n Ride, 120th Avenue at Huron Street. From I-25 exit 223 go west on 120th Ave. about 0.5-mi. to Huron, then turn left (south) on Huron and another left at the first traffic light into the parking lot. We'll head north, then west through Lyons into Allenspark to the Fawnbrook Inn to find Rosy-finches, woodpeckers, nuthatches, waxwings, grosbeaks, crossbills, and accipiters; then, depending on weather, we'll go exploring! We'll have lunch at a small diner in Allenspark; or you can pack a lunch if you prefer. Trip will wrap up in time to be back before dusk. Please notify one of the Leaders if you plan to attend.

Thank you, Tim Smart, for volunteering to help with trip scheduling. The DFO board is requesting more volunteers to support this task. Call Chuck Thornton-Kolbe at 303.777.7588 if you can help with the phone calling.

56th Annual Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 19, 2009



Count Leader/Compiler: Dick Schottler (303-278-8035, <birdscho@uswest.net>)
 Feeder Coordinators: Patty Echelmeyer (303-233-4947), Tina Jones (303-794-2647)
 Compilation meeting: 5:00 pm, Platte Park classroom, 7301 South Platte River Pkwy (South Platte Park and Carson Nature Center, West of Santa Fe north of Mineral)

All DFO members are encouraged to participate in the annual Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) sponsored by the Denver Field Ornithologists and the National Audubon Society. To participate, call one of the Area Leaders listed below to assist in a particular area, or call the Count Leader if you would like to help in an area that still needs additional observers. As can be seen on the list, **there are still several areas that do not have leaders and will not be covered unless volunteers are found to help out.** If you would be willing to lead in one of these areas, please call the Count Leader as soon as possible. After a day in the field, all participants are invited to attend the short compilation meeting to warm up, chat with other birders, and find out how the count fared. It is a lot of fun.

Fees: Each observer over the age of 18 must pay a \$5.00 fee to participate in the Denver CBC. Participants should pay the \$5.00 fee to their Area Leader before taking part in the Count. Checks should be made payable to *National Audubon Society*, not to DFO.

Pre-counts: Area Leaders are encouraged to conduct pre-counts in their areas, particularly if unfamiliar with the area. Since days and times of pre-counts will vary, contact an Area Leader if you wish to assist on a pre-count in a particular area. There is no fee for participating in a pre-count.

Area locations and names and phone numbers of Area Leaders are listed below. Participants should contact Area Leaders for meeting times and places on Count Day Saturday, December 19.

Area Number/Location	Leader	Phone Number
1. Red Rocks Park	Bob Brown	303-791-6204
2. Lower Bear Creek	Mike Henwood	303-716-8551
2A. Bear Creek Lake Park	Kathy Hawkins	303-969-8909
3. Bow Mar/Marston	Karl Stecher	303-779-8887
4A. Lower South Platte - East	Ed Holub	303-979-2194
4B. Lower South Platte - West	(leader needed)	
5. Highline Ditch	(leader needed)	
6. Plum Creek	Norm Erthal	303-424-6747
7A. Middle South Platte - West	Randy Lentz	303-680-3381
7B. Middle South Platte - East	Hugh Kingery	303-814-2723
8. Chatfield State Park	Joey Kellner	303-978-1748
9. Upper South Platte *	Jill Holden	303-972-6410
10. Lower Deer Creek	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
11. Upper Deer Creek	Paul Slingsby	303-422-3728
12. Yegge Peak	Ann Bonnell	303-979-6211
13. Doublehead Mountain	Tim Davis	303-841-6163
14. North Turkey Creek	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
15. Indian Hills	Sherman Wing	303-697-8840
16. Upper Bear Creek	(leader needed)	
17. Ken Caryl Ranch	Tom Bush	303-904-4576
18. Garrison Gate	(leader needed)	
19. Morrison/Willowbrook	Jackie King	303-287-1644
20. Willow Creek	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
21. Mount Lindo/Willow Springs	Wayne Wathen	720-344-0158

* to participate in this area, you must contact the area leader no later than Tuesday, December 15.

The Chihuahuan Desert, Critical Winter Habitat for Colorado Birds



DFOs Last Feature Meeting of 2009 Monday November 23, 7.30pm

As the last plaintive notes of bugling elk echo through mountain valleys, and November snow squalls threaten to blanket the streets and lawns of Denver, Greg Levandoski, a research biologist for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) will "transport" us south into the

vastness of the Chihuahuan desert. The Chihuahuan desert is one of North America's four major deserts and spreads across 200,000 sparsely populated square miles from Albuquerque, New Mexico, 750 miles south into the Mexican state of Zacatecas. In Mexico this region lies between the Sierra Madre Occidental in the west and the Sierra Madre Oriental in the east. In the US it encompasses the southeastern corner of Arizona, a portion of southern New Mexico, and a region of west Texas including the amazing Big Bend National Park. It is a relatively high desert rising from 1,900 ft. to 5,500 ft. above sea level.

Greg has worked on a wide variety of research projects ranging from monitoring nesting alcids in the Bering Sea, to counting migrating raptors along ridge lines in the West, to chasing warblers through Caribbean thorn forests. His search for a broad understanding of avian conservation needs has led Greg to work in 15 U. S. states (10 western), three Mexican states, and Jamaica. Join DFO to hear about Greg's work in the grasslands of the Chihuahuan desert of northern Mexico and gain a better understanding of the distribution and abundance of a part of North America's wintering bird populations.

NO DFO meeting in December, please plan to participate in the Denver Christmas Count and/or one of the many other Christmas Counts around the state! Monday January 25, 2010 welcomes back the always popular Bill Schmoker, Colorado Field Ornithologists Past President, teacher, and accomplished wildlife photographer will present us with a program which will "lift you out of the mid-winter doldrums!"

The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the museum and walk around and enter through the museum's west door. Plan to arrive by 7:15 p.m.; DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30 P.M. If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer door, but this creates problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Welcome New Members!

Nathanael Berry, 152 S. Jackson St, Denver, CO 80209, 303.789.2419, Lisa Gotlin, 5050 S Fulton St. Greenwood Village, CO 80111, 303.771.7939, Jacqueline and Robert Heyda, 18650 Arrowwood Dr, Monument, CO 80132, 719.487.8485
Wendy Sydow, 703 Harrison Dr. Lafayette, CO 80026, 303.665.5606

Contributions

Colorado Rare Bird Alert: Melissa Smith, Peggy Roberts, Bob Righter, Bill & Suzanne Wuerthele, Don Beltz, Peggy Gonder, Betsy Shaw, Lois Levinson, Sigurd & Dianne Nelson. Educational Endowment Fund: Melissa Smith, Peggy Roberts, Bob Righter, Bill & Suzanne Wuerthele, Betsy Shaw, Lois Levinson.
Thank you!

**It's time to renew your membership—the
form is on the inside last page...Thanks.**

What birds to look for in December and where to look for them...

DFO Birders,

The purpose of this column is to give you an idea of what birds to look for and where to look for them. I have enlisted the help of some well known birders around the state for their input and I hope this column is of help to you.

In December, the average high in Denver is 45 degrees and the average low is 17 degrees, down 8 degrees on the high and low from November, although it has reached 75 degrees and has fallen to -25 degrees and Alamosa has fallen to -42 degrees. Average snow fall for Denver in December is 7.4 inches but the greatest amount of snowfall in Denver from one storm was 45.7 inches from December 1-6, 1913. 37.6 inches were recorded between December 4-5th 1913 and a 24 hour snowfall record of 25.8 inches on December 4, 1913. The March 2003 blizzard left 31.8 inches at Stapleton and 19 inches at DIA.

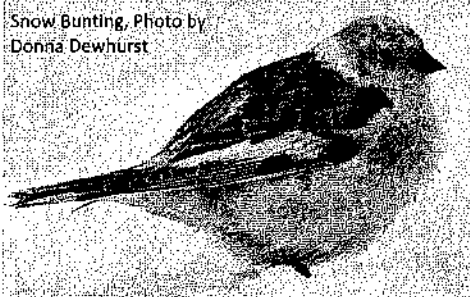
Many of the places I pointed out last month are still good bets for waterfowl in December. The Platte River, Barr Lake, Cherry Creek and Chatfield State Parks won't be frozen over in December. Pueblo Reservoir at Pueblo Lake State Park doesn't freeze over and is good all winter. If you want to see loons, with a good possibility of seeing four of the five North American species (though five have been seen in Colorado); Marston Reservoir in Denver County, Lake Pueblo, Standley Lake in Jefferson County, Boulder and Baseline Reservoirs in Boulder County as well as Cherry Creek and Chatfield Reservoirs are good places to look.

Gulls (yes I know that is a dirty word with some birders) become more abundant with a greater variety as December marches along. Cherry Creek State Park has had Glaucous-winged Gull more than once and on 1 occasion, I had 8 species of gulls just at the marina. Lake Loveland, the Larimer County landfill and Horseshoe Lake in Larimer County can have great variety as can the reservoir that lies between I-76 and the Platte River just north of 74th

Ave in Adams County. More than 1 Glaucous Gull was here on New Year's Day of this year. There are times you can get 10 species of gulls just at Lake Pueblo at the south marina.

Gyr Falcon is a rarity that may show up in winter in Colorado. The area around the Rawhide power plant, north of Ft. Collins hosted one though it was more than 10 years ago but one could be found anywhere on the eastern plains if there is a southward eruption of this impressive falcon, the largest in the world. You also can't rule out the mountains as one was seen at Walden Reservoir in Jackson County from November 5 to December 24, 2006.

Snow Bunting, Photo by Donna Dewhurst



Snow Bunting is another rarity that may be found on the eastern plains or in the mountains. They like the edge of lakes and reservoirs as evidenced by sightings at Jackson Lake State Park in Morgan County, Prewitt State Wildlife Area in Washington and Logan Counties, Pueblo Lake near the dam and there was

one last year at Antero Reservoir in Park County. When you encounter flocks of Horned Larks on the prairies, scan for birds with large white wing patches and if you see it, you have your Snow Bunting. Long-eared Owls are another visitor that is easier to find starting in December. The Russian olives at Jackson Lake State Park annually host these owls and they have also been seen at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal the last two winters.

If you are feeling very hardy, Guanella Pass above Georgetown is a spot to look for White-tailed Ptarmigan in their snow white winter plumage. Look under willows and look for sign of them in the droppings and tracks they leave. Ptarmigan can actually gain weight over the winter by feeding on willow buds.

Rufous-crowned Sparrows winter at the end of Tunnel Drive west of Canon City and will again this year as they have already been reported from this location. For the past several years, and again this year, a Golden-crowned Sparrow has also been reported in this area hanging around with the flocks of White-crowned Sparrows that also winter there. If you go to Canon City, don't fail to check the pines in the local parks and around the Abbey at the east side of town for all three species of sapsucker. And while

Continued on next page

December Birds, continued

I'm on the subject of sapsuckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are annual visitors to City Park in Pueblo. Look in the big pines at the east end of the park. Look carefully, as the sapsuckers frequently sit motionless on the trunk of the tree.

Bohemian Waxwings can be incredible during invasion years. Chatfield State Park has had hundreds in the campgrounds and you need to look anywhere there are fruit or crabapples on trees like in and around Greenlee Preserve in Boulder County. Make sure you check all waxwings for the cinnamon undertail coverts of the larger (than Cedar) Bohemian Waxwing.

The annual Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) are conducted during the last two weeks of December and into January. Count leaders are always looking for more help in covering their areas and novices are as welcome as experts at all counts. You can find listings of Colorado CBC's on Cobirds and the website for National Audubon: <http://app.audubon.org/cbcapp/findCircles.jsp?start=&state=US-CO&Submit1=Show+Circles>. And details on page 2 of this newsletter.

I want to thank Bill Schmoker, Bill Kaempfer and Karl Stecher for their contributions to this, my last installment of "What birds to look for and where to look for them". I want to thank everyone who sent me encouraging emails about how much they liked this series of columns. It's been a pleasure, and remember, everything I wrote about in 2009, applies to the forthcoming years so get out there and bird.

Thanks to you Ira, this has been a great series—I sure will miss it. I have looked forward to receiving your article every month. *The Editor*



Birds of Prey founder Sigrid Ueblacker dies at age 68

By Virginia Culver, *The Denver Post*

Sigrid Ueblacker, founder of Birds of Prey, an organization that saves injured and orphaned birds, died of unknown causes on Oct. 28. She was 68. A public memorial will be held in the spring, said her son, Gernot Ueblacker of Lakewood. "We have truly lost a hero, mentor and good friend to us and Colorado's wildlife," said Mary McCormac, in a memo. She is regional volunteer coordinator for the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Birds of Prey, in Broomfield, treated an estimated 10,000 birds in the years since its founding in 1982, Ueblacker's son said. The organization concentrates on owls, falcons, eagles and hawks and treats more than 450 birds a year. Some have been hurt by hitting high tension wires, others have been struck by vehicles and hurt in traps, Gernot Ueblacker said. He said the foundation has a huge "flight cage" where the treated birds can be put to test their capability to return to the wild. The "cage" is two stories high, he said, big enough for the birds to fly and catch prey. There's even a "mouse house" where mice are raised that can be used as prey for the recovering birds.

There is an intensive care unit for birds, and Sigrid Ueblacker enlisted veterinarians to help with serious cases. Sigrid Ueblacker often spoke at elementary schools to tell the students about her work, always taking at least one bird with her. "She worked about 70 to 80 hours a week," and part of that time was spent fundraising for the nonprofit organization, he said. Over the years "they had a 70 percent release rate," said Gernot Ueblacker. Fond as she was of the birds, Sigrid Ueblacker knew when it was time to give up on a bird, her son said. "She knew when to say when." Ueblacker was born in Vienna and majored in English, French and history at a college in Salzburg, Austria. She came to Denver in 1963.

She was married to Horst Ueblacker. They later divorced. In addition to her son, she is survived by two daughters: Elke Rogers of Norman, Okla., and Sabina Ueblacker of Denver; another son, Walter Ueblacker of Denver; three grandchildren; two step grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. *Virginia Culver: 303-954-1223 or vculver@denverpost.com*

Congratulations Warren Finch!

During the banquet of the May 2009 convention of the Colorado Field Ornithologists, Warren I. Finch was presented with its Lifetime Achievement Award, given to a person of fine character who has earned the esteem of birders by long service to the community. Previous awardees were Joe Himmel and Bob Spencer.

Born in 1924, Warren survived the Great Depression and served in the Second World War as a member of "The Greatest Generation." During a 60-year career, Warren Finch scampered over rock and rill as a uranium geologist for the US Geological Survey. In that role he was known by his peers as one of the world experts on nuclear materials and resources.

Warren's first birding memory was marveling at Long-billed Curlews as they soared over his Uncle Ward's farm. Bitten by the "birding bug" in the 1960s, he kept meticulous lists and began to lead countless field trips.

Dick Schottler, Warren's boon companion, recalls the 1986 trip they made to California. By then California Condors were on the brink of extinction, so Warren and Dick were delighted to see two of the last three free-flying birds soaring over the hills. Golden Eagles which had been feeding on a carcass suddenly looked small when the condors flew down to muscle their way into the carrion feast.

Warren, is a long-time DFO member, has served as president and historian and is described by his friends as a gentle, peaceful person with a keen interest and delight in birds. Wishing that his life experiences could be shared, he published his memoirs in 2007, *Alone – My Guardian Angel – Gunga Din*.

His words to live by are: "Always behave like a duck. Keep calm and unruffled on the surface, but paddle like hell underneath!" Well said, Warren Finch, recipient of the Colorado Field Ornithologists Lifetime Achievement Award.

(Condensed from "Colorado Birds," Vol.43 No. 4, October, 2009.)

Joe Roller, 965 S. Garfield St., Denver, CO 80209; pergm@aol.com

October Additional Reports

Species	Date	# Seen	Location	County	Observers
Loon, Pacific	10/11	1	Cherry Creek S.P.	Arapahoe	Bob Brown
Grebe, red-necked	10/22	1	Cherry Creek S.P.	Arapahoe	Bob Brown
Scooter, surf	10/25	1 imm	Eleven Mile Reservoir	Park	Joey Kellner
Bittern, American	10/16	1	Red Lion SWA	Logan	Joey Kellner, Chris Wood
Gull, lesser black-backed	10/25	1 adult	Chatfield Reservoir	Douglas	Kellner, Joey
Gull, Sabine's	10/4	1 juv.	Jumbo Reservoir	Logan, Sedgewick	Joey Kellner, Steve Larson, Randy Lentz, Joe Roller
Gull, Sabine's	10/13	1	Cherry Creek S.P.	Arapahoe	Bob Brown
Pipit, Sprague's	10/16	1 Heard only	Red Lion SWA	Logan	Joey Kellner, Chris Wood
Warbler, black-throated blue	10/9	1 female 1 male; LATE	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kellner, Dick Schottler
Tanager, Western	10/16	data	Morgan County Rd 2	Morgan	Joey Kellner, Chris Wood
Sparrow, field	10/2	1 western race	Last Chance Rest Area	Washington	Joey Kellner, Joe Roller, Dick Schottler
Sparrow, field	10/9	1 western race	Thompson Ranch	Washington	Joey Kellner, Dick Schottler
Sparrow, field	10/16	1 western race	Private Ranch	Logan	Joey Kellner, Chris Wood
Sparrow, Le Conte's	10/16	1	Jumbo Reservoir	Logan, Sedgewick	Joey Kellner, Chris Wood
Finch, purple	10/25-10/28	1 m.	Nijor feeder, 4430 Gladiola St, Golden	Jefferson	Joe Roller, Bob Spencer

Please send your reports to Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 1221 E Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

So Sayeth the Speaker...



Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, October 26, 2009

Tammy VerCauteren, Executive Director and Chuck Hundertmark, Chairman of the observatory, gave us a thorough, visually satisfying, and snappy overview of the goals and breadth of RMBO function, spicing up their talks with challenging bird ID quizzes always enjoyed by our membership.

Having started as the Colorado Birding Organization, RMBO has grown to be one of the largest such organizations in the nation. As it became clear that their mission could be best achieved within biologic and not political boundaries, they changed their name to RMBO. They work not just in Colorado, but throughout the region, including collaborative efforts as far south as Mexico and as far north as Montana.

Their mission is threefold: **Science, Education and Stewardship** with the overriding goal being to conserve birds and their habitats. They gather data about species' distribution, abundance, and changes in these parameters over time, then publish it online on the Avian Knowledge Network for widespread use in decision-making for land use, water, and other public policies. They work with multiple regional partners, both governmental and private, and are proud to have engaged private land-owners, who after all own most of Colorado bird habitat, calling them their "Prairie partners." Through education and resource allotment, they can mediate collaborative conservation efforts on private land, something that has been welcomed by Colorado land-owners.

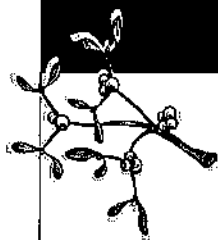
They developed materials like their "Pocket Guide to Prairie Birds", and the livestock tank ladders, and included land-owners in the Colorado Birding Trail. By working with governmental partners, they can tap into funds to improve prairie playas, counteract stream degradation, and protect >100,000 acres of private land habitat through more than 100 projects. To involve future generations, they work with children and schools to help instill a love of birds, including mist-net banding events, and will be expanding efforts to involve families. Adult citizen scientists are encouraged to get involved in community nest watching activities, including Bald Eagle Watch, Hawk Watch, and other activities. Upcoming seminars will include Jan 16, Hawk ID on the Prairie, Jan 23rd and 30th Bald Eagle Watch Orientation, and March 7th and 13th Hawk Watch Training.

A recent and ongoing project will be improving the grounds and public use of The Old Stone House located on the north side of Barr Lake, which serves as RMBO headquarters. It is an historically valuable dwelling that was originally used by Swiss farmers. RMBO recently restored it in exchange for a 100-year use lease. Their plan is to develop nature paths and trails on the house grounds, which can serve as birding areas outside the house and also signs and displays within the house that will lend to self-guided tours of historical interest.

They need volunteers for this work. While you're up there hacking out a trail, take a minute to enjoy the fine ornithological library housed in The Old Stone House before you call it a day. To volunteer or learn more about the many volunteer opportunities, call Kacie Ehrenberger at 303 659-4348, Ext 16 or go to their friendly website at www.RMBO.org.

Carol Blackard

Field Trip Summaries, October 2009



Oct 3, Saturday *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Mary Keithler. **Observers:** Pauline Ede, Betsy Shaw, Warren Finch, Peggy Wait, Deb Armer. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 16 miles by car, ½ mile on foot. **Habitat:** Open water, riparian, wetlands, elevation 5650'. **Weather:** Sunny, 36-56°F, calm. **Totals:** 35 species, 814 individuals.

Highlights: Ring-necked pheasant call, Sharp-shinned hawk, three white-tailed deer.

Oct 4, Sunday *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Ed Holub. **Observers:** Will Burt, Patricia Echelmeyer, Derek Hankins, Jackie Heyda, Sue Schulman, Chuck Walters. **Time:** 0800-1345. **Distance:** 12 miles by car, 1¼ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, river riparian, plains, elevation 5800'. **Weather:** Cloudy to partly cloudy, 44-60°F. **Totals:** 32 species, 572 individuals.

Oct 10, Saturday *Sand Creek Park (SAN)* Report not available at time of printing.

Oct 11, Sunday *"The Big Sit" (SIT)*

Leader(s): Joey Kellner. **Time:** 0530-1910. **Weather:** Overcast most of the day, partly cloudy by 1630, 1" snow on grasses most of the day, 24-31°F. **Totals:** 71 species, 2561 individuals.

Oct 17, Saturday *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Peggy Gonder. **Observers:** Tim Smart, Dean Shoup, Jamie Miller, Carol Larson, Stran Guernsey, Kolt Guernsey, Joe and Corrine Bartell. **Time:** 0700-1230. **Distance:** 1½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, lake and woods, elevation 5280'. **Weather:** Clear, sunny, 30-55°F, calm. **Totals:** 51 species, 1011 individuals. **Highlights:** We observed the last day of banding by RMBO, including two hermit thrush and a white-throated sparrow. A highlight the last hour was seeing a prairie falcon being harassed by a flicker.

Oct 18, Sunday *Walden Ponds (WAL)*

Leader(s): Kathy Mihm Dunning. **Observers:** Will Burt, Bill Buttner, Virginia Johnson (VA), Betsy Shaw. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, ponds, elevation 5400'. **Weather:** Clear and warm, 50-78°F, wind variable, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 34 species, 598 individuals. **Highlights:** The kingfisher show with several kingfishers chasing each other repeatedly.

Oct 24, Saturday *Rocky Mountain Arsenal (ROC)*

Leader(s): David Rhoades. **Observers:** Gary Ackert, Linda Ackert, Jean Alden, John Alden, Don Beltz, Jill Boice, Jean Eddins, and BJ, Edie Israel, Dean Shoup. **Time:** 0800-1300. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes, prairie, shelterbelts, woodlands, elevation 5250'. **Weather:** Cloudy, 55°F, northwest wind. **Totals:** 37 species, 441 individuals. **Highlights:** Pacific loon, Bald eagle (3 immature)

Oct 25, Sunday *Carson Nature Center, S Platte Park (CAR)*

Leader(s): Bob Brown. **Observers:** Mary Burger, Lisa Gotlin, Michael, Kiessig, Charlie Lawrence, Betsy Rumely, Betsy Shaw, Kathryn Smith, Steve Smith. **Time:** 0830-1130. **Distance:** 3¼ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Mixed suburban streamside, elevation 5400'. **Weather:** Overcast, some sleet and light snow, 35°F, variable wind, up to 10mph. **Totals:** 37 species, 223 individuals.

Oct 31, Saturday *Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (WHE)* Report not available at time of printing.

Tuesday Birders

Oct 6 *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 29. **Time:** 0830-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, prairie, reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, willow, cattails, agriculture, elevation 5100-5300'. **Weather:** Sunny, breezy, 37-62°F, variable wind, 0-15mph. **Totals:** 44 species, 996 individuals.

What's in a Name?



Nucifraga columbiana/Columbia (River) Nut-breaker is known by us as the Clark's Nutcracker. Captain William Clark (1770-1838) was the namesake of this familiar bird after he sent a specimen to Thomas Jefferson who in turn sent it to Alexander Wilson for description. In 1811, Mr. Wilson, (we know his warbler) gave the bird its common name after Capt. Clark.

The other half of the dynamic duo was Captain Meriwether Lewis – 1774-1809. In 1805, while on the famous expedition with Capt. Clark, he collected the beautiful woodpecker near Helena, MT.

Capt. Lewis (obviously a relative of our own, Norm) was the manager of his family's plantation and served as an officer in the army before becoming T. Jefferson's secretary. The president chose him to lead the expedition because of his botany, natural history and astronomy knowledge, all around good character and familiarity with the American Indians. Capt. Lewis chose his army friend Wm. Clark to accompany him on the trek.

The rest, as they say, is history. An interesting note: the actual woodpecker specimen is thought to be the only bird specimen left from the expedition and currently resides at Harvard. Another note: we still enjoy Meriwether's long lost cousin, Norm.

Good birding to all, Niña

October Field Trip Summaries, continued from previous page.

Oct 13 *Mount Falcon Jeffco Open Space Park (MOU)*

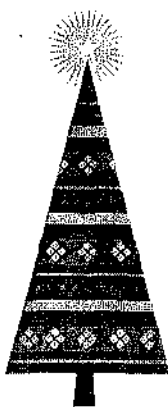
Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 31 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 2¼ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Foothills scrub, ponderosa pine, juniper and open meadows, elevation 7750-7859'. **Weather:** Foggy to partly cloudy, 33-47°F, variable wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 24 species, 258 individuals.

Oct 20 *Belmar Historic Park (BEL)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else Van Erp. **Observers:** 37 (2 groups). **Time:** 0915-1215. **Distance:** 3½ miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, grassland, wetland, man-made ponds, elevation 5400'. **Weather:** Sunny to cloudy, 48-50°F, northeast wind, 3-12mph. **Totals:** 28 species, 327 individuals.

Oct 27 *Rocky Mountain Arsenal (ROC)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 32. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Plains riparian, wetlands, plains shortgrass prairie, cottonwoods and man-made lakes, elevation 5250'. **Weather:** Cloudy to sunny, 47-61°F, variable wind, 0-5mph. **Totals:** 41 species, 801 individuals.



The 2010 Membership Form is on
the next page...Thanks!

DENVER URBAN CHRISTMAS COUNT January 1, 2010

We invite everybody to participate – beginners, intermediate, and advanced. The more eyes we have, the more birds we see. And we like to encourage people to get involved. Start the New Year with a half day or whole day effort--a good way to start your New Year's List! The count covers a circle with a 15-mile diameter that includes the Platte River from North City limits to Mississippi, west to Buckley Field and Rocky Mtn. Arsenal. \$5.00 fee, payable to National Audubon Society, to defray costs.

After the count, at 5:00 pm, join us for a **Pot Luck** at Casey Davenport's, 415 South High (five blocks west of University, about 2 blocks south of Alameda); please call Urling (303.814.2723) or Casey (303.744.0613) so we can count you in on the chili pot, Urling's brownies, Casey's hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie, or finger foods. Count Leader, Hugh Kingery, 303.814.2723.

<u>Area Location</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	
South Platte (south) To Confluence Park	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072	Some walking
South Platte (central) Confluence Park to Riverside Cemetery	Casey Davenport	303-744-0613	Some walking
South Platte (north)	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035	Walking
[Rocky Mtn. Arsenal	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723	Walking]
** Full – we'll take names for a waiting list. **			
Commerce City/Montbello	Jackie King	303-287-1644	Car
Sand Creek/Tollgate Creek, Bluff Lake, & Aurora	Randy Lentz Buzz Schaumburg	303-680-3381 303-699-1721	Walking
Cherry Creek Res.	Bob Brown	303-791-6204	Some walking
Kent School, S/Hampden	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000	Some walking
SE Denver, N/Hampden	Karen Bickett	303 935 5808	Walking
Cherry Creek, dam to University Blvd.	Paul Slingsby <paslingsby@comcast.net>	303-422-3728	7-mile walk
[Fairmont, Lowry Field	Tuesday Birders	303-979-6211	Car, some walking]
** Full **			
City Park/Park Hill	Kevin Corwin	720-482-8454	Car, some walking
Botanic Gardens, Denver Country Club, Wash. Park	303-674-6580 Marilyn Rhodes Bob Santangelo		Car, some walking

Denver Field Ornithologists 2010 Membership Application

Please indicate whether this is a ☐ New Membership or a ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st. If you would prefer to have the Lark Bunting emailed to you, please include your email address.

One Year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00

One Year Family Membership (First Class Mail Lark Bunting is \$10 more) \$30.00

Student/Youth Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5

First class mailing of field trip reports—for those without internet access or who just want the paper reports.

Trip reports online free at www.dfobirders.org.

**\$10 annually in
addition to
Membership**

Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$____

With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sightings of rare or unusual birds, located on the Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site

Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$____

DFO awards grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats as well as preservation.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting:

E-Mail Address _____

**Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to:
Mary Burger, 10826 E. Maplewood Place, Englewood, CO 80111-5742.**

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

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Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

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Feb, May, Aug, Nov
Meredith Anderson, 303.280.8576
Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec

Lark Bunting Editor/Webmaster

Veronica Holt, 303.646.3829
veronicaholt@Q.com

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Dick Kolbe, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome and openly solicited. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80232, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net.

Additional Reports

Polleke Siraa, psiraa@earthlink.net, 1221 E Amherst Cr., Aurora, CO 80014, 303.755.2522.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dacbcocook@comcast.net

Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Monna Krebs 303 421-6478

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy). Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

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☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

☐ Contribution to the Colorado Rare Bird Alert \$ _____

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State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Electronic Lark Bunting Email address: _____

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE DECEMBER 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS					TUESDAY BIRDERS	TOTAL
	5 LOW	6 BAR	12 FOR	13 PAW	19 PAR	1 PRO	
Pied-billed Grebe		2				3	5
American White Pelican		4					4
Great Blue Heron			1				1
Greater White-fronted Goose		5					5
Snow Goose				6			6
"White morph"				6			(6)
Canada Goose	300	126	475	1200	325	682	3108
Cackling Goose	50	1100	175	250		100	1675
Wood Duck			6	2			8
Gadwall		2		2		21	25
American Wigeon		7	114	2		19	142
Mallard			315	50		92	457
Northern Shoveler		3881	185			30	4096
Northern Pintail		82	8				90
Green-winged Teal		2	2	20		5	29
Redhead			3			1	4
Ring-necked Duck			3			13	16
Lesser Scaup						2	2
duck sp					50		50
Bufflehead		14				24	38
Common Goldeneye		61	18			27	106
Hooded Merganser		1	6			18	25
Common Merganser		2	19			2	23
Red-breasted Merganser						16	16
Bald Eagle		3	1	2		1	7
Northern Harrier		6		6			12
Cooper's Hawk			1				1
accipiter sp.				1			1
Red-tailed Hawk	4	5	23	12	1	4	49
western races	4		(1)	12			(17)
"Harlan's" race		2					(2)
Ferruginous Hawk		2		4			6
Rough-legged Hawk				8			8
Golden Eagle				4			4
American Kestrel		6	3	15	1		25
Merlin			1	1			2
Prairie Falcon		2					2
Ring-necked Pheasant		2		2			4
Wild Turkey				18			18
Virginia Rail				1			1
American Coot		160	42			26	228
Killdeer	1						1

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE DECEMBER 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS					TUESDAY BIRDERS	TOTAL
	5 LOW	6 BAR	12 FOR	13 PAW	19 PAR	1 PRO	
Long-billed Dowitcher							0
Wilson's Snipe						1	1
Red-necked Phalarope							0
Ring-billed Gull		25	5	7	4	78	119
Ivory Gull							0
Rock Pigeon	3	4	30	50			87
Eurasian Collared-dove		26		125		2	153
Mourning Dove	1			1		6	8
Barn Owl		2					2
Great Horned Owl					1		1
Rufous Hummingbird							0
Belted Kingfisher			3	1		1	5
Downy Woodpecker		2	1	1		2	6
"eastern" race				(1)			(1)
Hairy Woodpecker							0
Northern Flicker	5	28	3	2	7	14	58
"Red-shafted" race	(5)	(28)					(33)
Buff-breasted Flycatcher							0
Northern Shrike	2	1		1			4
Blue Jay	3	7	2		2	6	20
Western Scrub-Jay	7						7
Black-billed Magpie	8	22	5	1	5	8	49
American Crow	1		6			24	31
Common Raven			3				3
Horned Lark		25000		700			25700
Black-capped Chickadee	3		2		4	15	24
Mountain Chickadee	1		1				2
Red-breasted Nuthatch			2				2
White-breasted Nuthatch	1		1			2	4
Brown Creeper						5	5
Canyon Wren	1						1
Marsh Wren				1			1
Western Bluebird					7		7
Townsend's Solitaire	2						2
American Robin	16	9	3	3		1	34
European Starling		651	2	500		41	1194
American Pipit		2					2
Cedar Waxwing				27			27
Spotted Towhee	4					5	9
Fox Sparrow							0
Song Sparrow	3	9		2	1	3	18
White-throated Sparrow						1	1
White-crowned Sparrow		5	1			3	9

FIELD TRIP SUMMARY TABLE DECEMBER 2009

SPECIES DATE LOCATION	DFO FIELD TRIPS					TUESDAY BIRDERS	TOTAL
	5	6	12	13	19	1	
	LOW	BAR	FOR	PAW	PAR	PRO	
Dark-eyed Junco	7	46	4	2		30	89
"State-colored" race	2	(19)					(21)
"Oregon" race	2	(11)	4				(17)
"Pink-sided" race	3	(14)				19	(36)
"Gray-headed" race		(2)				3	(5)
Lapland Longspur				3			3
Red-winged Blackbird	150	2082	50	250		13	2545
Western Meadowlark		6		4			10
Brewer's Blackbird			20				20
Great-tailed Grackle		10					10
House Finch	8	33	12			33	86
Red Crossbill			8				8
White-winged Crossbill			1				1
Pine Siskin	4		36				40
American Goldfinch		5		3			8
House Sparrow		48		450		1	499
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	587	33498	1602	3740	408	1381	41,216
TOTAL SPECIES	24	44	43	40	12	42	83
OBSERVATION LEGEND:							
a=adult, i=immature, j=juvenile, y=young, n=nesting, m=male, f=female, h=heard only, c=calling, s=singing, boldface=rare,unusual, + =also/in addition to, x=individual data incomplete/not enumerated							

Lower Deer Creek (LOW)

Barr Lake State Park (BAR)

Fort Collins Lakes (FOR)

Pawnee National Grasslands, Weld County (PAW)

Parker Regional Park (PAR)

Allenspark, Foothills and the Fawnbrook Inn (ALL)

Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (PRO)

Bear Creek Lake Park (BEA)